

Legislative Council

Thursday, 20 November 1986

THE PRESIDENT (Hon. Clive Griffiths) took the Chair at 11.00 a.m., and read prayers.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL CHAMBER

Dress: Motion

HON. GARRY KELLY (South Metropolitan) [11.03 a.m.]: I move—

To revoke the resolution dated March 27 1973 which reads as follows—

That in the opinion of this House the convention regarding members' dress may be altered from time to time to permit Members, who desire to do so, to remove their coats during sitting hours should the atmospheric conditions, in the House, in the opinion of the President, warrant such modification of this convention,

and substitute:

That members present in the Chamber, at their discretion, may remove their jackets at any time during a sitting.

It is a little silly for the House to be debating issues such as this when it has more substantive issues to debate, but it was a decision of the House some years ago that the existing procedure would be followed.

The convention with regard to dress, not only in this place but elsewhere, was laid down at a time when our forebears paid little attention to the climate and adopted attitudes and behaviours that were more appropriate to Europe instead of considering the conditions in the new colony, as it was at that time. The rules laid down do not apply to women who, at that time, did not have a vote and the idea of there being women members of Parliament was not even considered. The rules of convention are silent on dress for women and, as a result, no rules apply to them. The same should apply to males.

Quite often I sit in this House and become quite envious of Hon. Margaret McAleer, Hon. Beryl Jones and Hon. Kay Hallahan because they look as cool as cucumbers and we are sweltering in our coats. If they wanted to, they could sit in this House in their bikinis.

The principle behind the 1973 decision is a little annoying. I am not being disrespectful to the President, but it is annoying to have to ask permission to take one's coat off. We are paid substantial salaries to make decisions for the good government of the State, but we are not able to make a decision which affects our everyday life—whether we should wear a coat.

The 1973 decision refers to "atmospheric conditions", and this conjures up in one's mind the idea of lightning and thunder bolts in the Chamber. It should not be dependent on atmospheric conditions. On the coldest day in the middle of winter one often feels most uncomfortable in his attire, but he is forced to wear a coat. We are mature enough to decide what our attire should be.

The women members of this House, both past and present, have not abused the privilege, and I do not anticipate that male members will. I presume that the justification for members being forced to wear their coats is to ensure that dignity is added to the House. I do not subscribe to that view. I cannot think of anything that detracts more from the dignity of this place than the decision to force members to sit in the Chamber wearing their coats when it is most uncomfortable.

The President's rule is that when the thermometer reaches 28 degrees he will make a decision about whether members will wear their coats. Perhaps I am wrong, but that is my understanding. If the Chambers were air-conditioned this motion would not be necessary. I suspect there is a part in this Chamber that is air-conditioned; that is, the drawer in which the President keeps his thermometer. I have often considered that the temperature has reached the magic figure before members have been allowed to remove their coats.

The era of laying down rules has past. We are now living in a time where we should be able to decide our own dress of our own volition, especially when one considers that we are living in the age of equal opportunity laws and sexual equality.

Hon. D. K. Dans: And discrimination.

Hon. GARRY KELLY: I think the Leader of the House may mean anti-discrimination. We read advertisements in the paper indicating that an employer is an equal opportunity employer. Let the Council be an equal opportunity employer and allow the male members to be equal to the female members.

HON. G. E. MASTERS (West—Leader of the Opposition) [11.09 a.m.]: I oppose the motion. I did not wear a blue suit today especially for the occasion, but I am pleased I did. Although the motion appears to be innocuous, it does raise a number of issues to which I will make reference.

There will be some implications if we go on down the road in the direction suggested and they need to be drawn to members' attention. The President is charged with maintaining order in the House and he does so by way of Standing Orders. That is our guide. The President also maintains the accepted practices and standards observed in the Legislative Council and indeed, we must conduct ourselves with a certain amount of decorum. I am not now talking about the wearing of jackets. I recognise that debates deteriorate at different times for one reason or another.

Hon. J. M. Berinson: This one is deteriorating now.

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: I am sure that members are not listening to what I am saying even though some of them may be interested in my comments. This is not a party issue, some of my colleagues disagree with me completely.

When the President operates in this House and maintains the standards and dignity of the House, we are often on view to people in the gallery. Apart from general members of the public, groups of school children are often present in the Public Gallery, most of whom are properly dressed in school uniform.

It is not just a question of wearing jackets. It may be that some time in the future **Hon. Garry Kelly** may aspire to the position of President and he will be charged with the responsibility of maintaining order.

Hon. Garry Kelly: I hope not.

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: The member is already one of the Deputy Chairmen of Committees. In the 12 years I have been a member, I have seen a number of members come into this House intent on changing the system; they often start that way. **Hon. Robert Hetherington** will understand and remember **Hon. Grace Vaughan** spitting fire and making some superb speeches.

Hon. D. K. Dans: And using the men's toilet.

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: However, eventually she became very much aware of the functions of the Legislative Council and she championed much of the work carried out by it. This Council plays an important role which should be,

and is, very different from that of the Legislative Assembly. We are very slowly developing a committee system—I am ranging over a wide area. Unfortunately the development of that system is very slow and I draw the attention of the Government to the report of the committee on committees which I am very sorry to see so low on the Notice Paper.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The member certainly is ranging over the issue. It is obvious that the President should listen a little more intently to what the member is saying, but for the life of me I cannot associate that last comment with the motion before the Chair.

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: The comment is on the record and I will not proceed with it. I realise I was wrong.

We must accept some sort of discipline in the Legislative Council and we must exercise some control.

Hon. Garry Kelly: What about self-discipline?

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: If the House operates in a shoddy or slack fashion for one reason or another, that shoddiness or slackness will be reflected in the work it does. We are partly to blame for the things which happen but should not; nevertheless, we should be heading in the direction of maintaining standards. Those who ridicule our system usually end up as the subject of ridicule.

The President has never been unreasonable when a request was made for jackets to be removed because of atmospheric conditions. This procedure should be maintained; it is a matter of courtesy; nothing more and nothing less. People may say there is nothing wrong with taking off their jackets but how far shall we go? If we followed that line, in winter time some members may decide that they prefer to wear a sweater rather than a jacket or that they do not wish to wear a tie.

Hon. D. K. Dans: That is not the motion.

Hon. G. E. MASTERS: That is how the situation would deteriorate. The motion before the Chair would allow people into the Chamber without wearing jackets and they could wear sweaters. I do not know whether it would allow them to take off their ties.

The other place sometimes looks more like a works canteen than a House of Parliament and I do not want this House to deteriorate in that way.

Hon. D. K. Dans: There is nothing wrong with the legislation it gets through.

Hon G. E. MASTERS: I think the way it goes about it is unbecoming. These things gradually work down the line, starting with one issue.

Visitors from all over the world use the dining room which is a very pleasant, well-set out room and a credit to all concerned. However, on a number of occasions, I have seen people in the dining room wearing sweaters, open shirts, and not suitably dressed in accordance with the standards required. These declining standards creep in step by step. If people are allowed to remove their jackets, the next challenge is, why insist that ties be worn? We are starting a levelling down process and allowing things to be second-rate rather than first-rate. We should be striving for excellence and maintaining the decorum and standards of the House. This is one chink in the armour and the wedge in the door. More and more of these practices will be eroded.

The motion is unnecessary and the decision should be left to the President of the day, whoever he or she may be. Such decisions have never been unreasonably withheld.

HON. D. K. DANS (South Metropolitan—Leader of the House) [11.17 a.m.]: This is not a party issue and the views I express are my own. In the first instance, I have the utmost respect for the President, but I very much resent anyone telling me when I am comfortable or uncomfortable. Parliament must reflect the community standards observed outside this place. Only a few years ago in many restaurants, in hotels, and at all manner of functions and places, one was not permitted to enter without wearing a coat and tie. If any business or institution applied that rule in the public arena today, it would be broke because those standards have gone by the board.

I cannot accept the argument that if we start by taking off our coats, in four or five years' time we shall be sitting here in the nick.

Hon G. E. Masters: I did not say that.

Hon D. K. DANS: The Leader of the Opposition said that it starts and he does not know there it will end. I would be a little embarrassed if that were the case.

Hon. P. G. Pendal: You will be retired by then.

Hon D. K. DANS: Even if I were not, I would have to leave because I would be too embarrassed to come into the Chamber.

This debate has been held before, but community standards have changed and the motion before the Chair is simply to allow a member to

exercise his own good sense and to allow him to remove his coat. We are not asking that the requirement to wear ties be removed.

It is rather sad that we are debating an issue like this. The Press is reporting it and when it becomes public, the community will wonder what we are doing here. Some of the comments made by Mr Masters are correct and I would not support a motion that members could wear a pullover in this Chamber. I perspire very profusely, as do a number of other members.

Hon P. G. Pendal: A lot of them sweat.

Hon D. K. DANS: When the President feels cool, I may feel extremely uncomfortable.

When conditions become uncomfortable and unpleasant, it is reflected in the standard of debate. We have the ludicrous situation of being allowed to wear safari suits into the Chamber. Hon. Phil Lockyer has become a man of athletic and svelte figure, and looked very good in his safari suit yesterday. I have a couple of safari suits, but I remind him that they are out of fashion now—they are simply not being worn. But if I wore one next week, I would be in order. Underneath my coat I am wearing a short-sleeved shirt and a tie. If I were to take my coat off now, I would be out of order; whereas if I came in here next week wearing my safari suit I would be in order. If I tucked my safari suit into my pants—and after all, no-one says one has to wear the jacket inside or outside the pants—I would not have a tie on. I would be wearing an open-necked shirt, and would be in order.

Someone else made the point that no rules govern what women can wear in this Chamber. I used to be very envious of Hon. Lyla Elliott, because she was loosely clothed. This is a serious matter. Many of the attitudes expressed were similar to what my mother used to tell me: Clothes maketh the man. What a lot of rot! Look at all the young, intelligent people who blow that theory right out the window. In doctors' surgeries or at hospitals our brilliant young surgeons wear beards and open-necked shirts. My mother always used to tell me to make sure I wore clean underclothes because if I were run over the people at the hospital would have to strip me. I am sure that if I had been mangled by a train, or whatever, the last thing those people would be interested in is whether I had changed my underclothes.

Strict dress rules have gone out of fashion in almost every institution. When our judges and stipendiary magistrates go up north they follow new rules of dress, as Mr Lockyer would know.

I was very envious of him yesterday, and to show I bear him no ill will I will wear a safari suit next week, in company with him, although not many of them are being worn these days. I might even tuck the jacket inside my trousers.

It is about time we were a little more sensible and presented an image to the public that we are not a lot of old fuddy-duddies out of step with modern dress. The motion is a simple one to allow us to take off our coats. It does not mention ties. It has nothing to do with committees on committees, or dining rooms; they are different issues. We are merely looking to enable members in this House to exercise a little commonsense while having regard for the dignity of the place. People do not look any worse or better in here if they wear a coat, so long as they wear a short or long-sleeved shirt with their tie or, for that matter, a safari suit.

I urge members to exercise their own discretion when considering this matter. The last debate on this matter, some years ago, went on and on. Some members here now were in Government at the time, and they did not agree with what I said then; but it is now 13 years down the track. One can now go to the Parmelia Hotel or the Merlin Hotel without a jacket. If those hotels were to apply the dress rules, they would go out of business. This is not a revolutionary step; merely a simple one.

With all due respect to you, Mr President, I resent anyone telling me whether I feel comfortable or uncomfortable. If I am good enough to come here and represent my electorate, on whichever side of the House, I am good enough to determine for myself whether I am hot or cold.

HON. E. J. CHARLTON (Central) [11.25 a.m.]: I disagree with some of the points made by the Leader of the House. Firstly, I think Hon. Phil Lockyer looks much better today than he did yesterday.

Seriously, though, if the alternative to allowing members to remove their jackets is to air-condition this Chamber, then I would prefer that members be allowed to remove their jackets. I am not of the opinion that this place should be air-conditioned.

Hon. D. K. Dans: You will be an old man with a grey beard before they draw the plans.

Hon. E. J. CHARLTON: Before I came to this place, the Parliament seldom sat during the hot months of December, January, and February. It would be a very expensive exercise to air-condition the Chamber, and that is one of the reasons I support the motion, bearing in

mind the remarks of the previous speakers. The motion merely proposes that members be allowed to remove their jackets, which is a pretty realistic thing to do. As I have commented during other debates, I do not think that just because other groups in society approve new rules which become accepted standards, we must automatically follow them like a mob of sheep. For instance, people attend the Perth Cup in their black Stubbies, half done, which is not acceptable to me. However, I would not wish our standards to be relaxed any further than is proposed by this motion.

With all respect to you, Mr President, I would like us to be able to remove our jackets during the summer months. When the weather has been hot in the past, we have been given the opportunity by you; however, it should not be your responsibility, Sir, to decide for everyone here. Individuals should be responsible for their own actions. I support the motion, but in doing so emphasise I am agreeing only to the proposition that members may remove their jackets. I certainly would not agree to doing away with ties. Indeed, I would not mind if an amendment were added to the effect that safari suits be not permitted.

HON. GRAHAM EDWARDS (North Metropolitan) [11.27 a.m.]: I strongly support the motion and take the line adopted by the Leader of the House; that is, surely we are mature enough to decide for ourselves when our coats should be removed. I have always appreciated the opportunity to remove my coat in this House. When that opportunity has been given, I do not believe it has led to any degrading or debasing of the debate or lowering of the standard of behaviour here.

For instance, if schoolchildren happened to come in at a time when your order, Sir, was current and coats were removed, I am sure they would not go away feeling any worse about the fact that we in here were more comfortable and perhaps a little kinder to each other and able to concentrate harder on the debate in a more comfortable and reasonable personal situation.

The matter really comes down to personal situations. I noted Hon. Kay Hallahan's comment earlier to the effect that she was "goosey". One of the things that irks me from time to time is the difference between people in the way they respond to heat or cold. While Hon. Kay Hallahan may sit here feeling cool without a coat on, I can assure her that I feel quite hot with one on. It comes down to a matter of personal preference. In my own case, when wheeling around the place on the carpets,

I feel quite hot and I would really appreciate the opportunity to take my coat off, perhaps more than anyone else. I am not suggesting that is a reason for us to agree to this motion, but it is an indication of how we respond individually to different atmospheric conditions. I feel strongly that it is a matter on which individuals should be allowed to make flexible decisions.

I believe that these dress standards have their origins in some archaic military tradition of years ago when it was very important for people to attend formal occasions dressed to the letter in their military regalia. If they did not dress that way, they were not admitted to any formal type of occasion, whether it was a dinner, a formal meeting, or a formal sitting of any description.

Military discipline is not the question in this matter. The question is whether members should be allowed to feel individually comfortable without their coats on. I think we should concentrate on that aspect of the matter. I do not believe it will lead to a decline in standards. One of my colleagues in fact suggested that I should not participate in this debate because I have been wearing shorts and coming into this House without shoes and socks for years. I do not believe that has led to any decline in standards, and I do not believe we can extend the debate the way Hon. Gordon Masters wishes it to be extended.

Having been involved in the decision to get coats off in the dining room, I do not think we have suffered any decline in standards. It is interesting to note the number of people, dressed in suits, coming into the dining room from the Chamber because the first thing they do is remove their coats. It is appropriate that they should do so. I agree entirely with Hon. Eric Charlton; I would hate to see this place air-conditioned. I might like to see it in other rooms of this building, but I would hate to see it here.

Another reason for this motion is that we are sitting earlier these days and we are more into the heat of the day.

I think this is a great motion and I hope that the House will carry it. I say that as one who has experienced a military situation and has been subject to fairly severe discipline. I support this motion quite freely in the belief that it will not lead to a decline of standards in this House. I believe it will make members a bit more comfortable and perhaps make them a little kinder to each other.

I support the motion.

HON. V. J. FERRY (South-West) [11.32 a.m.]: This is a worthy topic for consideration.

I believe the time has come for some change in the method by which members may be dressed in this Chamber. It might come as a surprise to many members, but I once enlisted in the Australian Army—I did in fact spend more time in the Air Force—and my mother, who was a great one for etiquette and protocol, instructed me when I entered the army that I must put on a clean pair of socks every day. At the end of the first week I could not get my boots on.

I believe the members of this Chamber need relief from the heat because the building, as we know, is not air-conditioned, which is more the pity. In the public's eye it is never the right time to spend money on Parliament House or its surrounds, and that is a great shame. Although this House has sat during periods of hot weather over many years, the sittings during the hot summer months have increased markedly since the advent of the Burke Labor Government. That is just the way this Government has been operating; it has called Parliament together during the very hot months of the year for its own good reasons. However, that is a fact of life and it has caused great discomfort, not only for members of Parliament, but also for the staff of Parliament House. We have been meeting during the hotter months of the year.

A few months ago I was in Darwin and visited the Legislative Assembly Chamber there. I was quite amazed to find that, without exception, all the members of the Legislature wore coats. It was 34 degrees celsius outside, and very steamy, but their Chamber was air-conditioned. I was exceedingly impressed with their decorum. They were very well presented.

Hon. D. K. Dans: Before it was air-conditioned they used to wear shorts.

Hon. V. J. FERRY: That is probably quite right, but that is the difference. If one has the right conditions, one can dress accordingly. We do not have those conditions here and, therefore, there needs to be some change for the benefit of the members. With that in view I believe there needs to be an amendment to the motion put forward by Hon. Garry Kelly. However, before I move the amendment I want to express my view that all members should give earnest consideration, and I believe they will, to the decorum and the presentation of this House. This is not a fast-food place nor is it a

beach resort; it is the Parliament of Western Australia and therefore without doubt it has some prestige. If it has not, we do not deserve to have this sort of Parliament because the people put us here, mostly in good faith and trust, to carry out a responsible job in a responsible way. Part of that is decorum and the way in which members behave, and the way in which we reflect ourselves in our dress. I hope that members will behave sensibly, if this motion is put in place.

Amendment to Motion

I move—

That the motion be amended by adding the words—

From 1 November to 31 March, otherwise dress will be at the discretion of the President.

HON. ROBERT HETHERINGTON (South-East Metropolitan) [11.38 a.m.]: I oppose the amendment to the motion and support the original motion.

You, Mr President, sitting there are a constant reminder to members that conventions about dress change. At one stage in the House of Commons, no-one would have dreamed of appearing in the House without a full-bottomed wig and a sword. That is why there is still a sword line in the House of Commons. Since then the convention has changed. Since this Parliament came into being, the conventions about dress have changed in the community in general. I believe that we should follow the convention which exists in the community in general. We should change the now archaic conventions of this House.

For this reason I support the original motion because I believe we should follow the conventions, but beyond that I also believe that we should have the freedom to appear as we want to be and be judged on what we are.

Unfortunately the Parliaments in Britain and here emerged at the time of the great public schools and the fourth formers who did what the prefects told them. So the President and the Speaker were put in the position of head prefects to maintain order among the unruly children and tell them what to wear. It is time we got rid of that. I am prepared to be judged on what I wear, and not what other people think I should wear.

Sometimes when I go to schools at the end of the year and it is hot I wear a suit, which is the uniform of a parliamentarian going to schools, and everyone is wearing shorts, and I regret I

set those standards for myself, but I do. I do not see why I should be forced to wear anything other than what I think is correct. Sometimes the rules become ludicrous. Some years ago when I was teaching at the University of Western Australia I went to the Parliament House dining room as a guest of the then Deputy Leader of the Opposition, Hon. Mal Bryce. I was very properly dressed in neat shorts which were ironed and pressed, long socks and shoes, and a shirt and tie. I had taken great care to see that I was impeccably dressed. The rule was that one had to wear a jacket, so Mal Bryce went and got one of his jackets which fitted me. It was in great big squares—I think he had it made for his horse's blanket, and I looked ludicrous.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I draw the honourable member's attention to the fact that the mover of the motion originally indicated that he thought this would be a relatively quick transaction. That has nothing to do with your speaking, but it has something to do with the fact that you are currently prolonging the debate by talking about everything else except the words proposed to be added to the motion. That is what you should be speaking about. The question before the Chair is that the words be added, and I suggest you speak about that.

Hon. ROBERT HETHERINGTON: With respect, it is rather difficult to speak on whether the words should be added without referring to the original motion, because it is all part of the one. However, I accept your ruling as ever.

To reinforce what I was saying, adding these words to the motion would mean we are still little boys and we do not have to accept instruction at certain months of the year but at other months we will do as we are told. I think this is entirely unnecessary. Some people will feel hot in August, and some will feel hot in April. There will be bursts of heat at various times, and some members feel uncomfortable when others do not. At some times of the year I wear coats when other people do not, and vice versa. Therefore, I do not believe we should accept the amendment. We should have the right as mature human beings to decide when it is appropriate to wear a jacket and when it is not, as we do outside this Chamber. We should make that decision ourselves inside the Chamber.

HON. P. H. LOCKYER (Lower North) [11.43 a.m.]: It is rare that I agree with members of the other side of the House, but on this occasion I oppose the amendment. I am inclined to agree with Hon. Robert Hetherington

that we are all mature people, and if we are going to accept any changes we can make the decision ourselves in relation to any month of the year.

I was a bit worried that the mover of the motion might have taken a lead from my friend on my left from cocky country who has a snout on safari suits. I would hate to see their demise in this Chamber, particularly after my good friend, the Leader of the Government (Hon. D. K. Dans), asked me last night where I purchased my safari suits, and I said Cargills. I did not want to suggest where he should go. I believe they are a fine thing to wear in the Chamber in hot weather. They are in fashion in the north of this State, and I believe we are mature enough to make decisions as to the mode of dress. I do not know that I would accept anyone telling me at certain months of the year that I have to wear a coat and tie.

If we are going to step into modern times we should make a decision about wearing coats. I have always respected your rulings, Mr President, on the mode of dress. I well remember on one occasion an honourable member came in wearing a denim jacket which offended a number of members of this Chamber. He would have been far better dressed without a jacket at all. He got some cheap publicity on television, but he added nothing to the decorum of the place.

While I respect what Hon. Vic Ferry is trying to do in maintaining the decorum of this Chamber, I believe it is a matter for the individual. If members want to act like clowns they will be treated as such by the public and the Press. If we want to maintain decorum and be dressed in neat attire we do not need a coat to do it. I think it is a step in the right direction. As long as the mode of dress is controlled by you, Mr President, as you have in the past, I will be satisfied. You have discreetly let someone know if his dress was unacceptable. It is up to members to decide whether they want to remove their coats throughout the year. I know I will not offend my friend who moved the amendment, but I oppose it.

HON. B. L. JONES (Lower West) [11.48 a.m.]: I oppose the amendment which is based on an assumption that summer comes at defined times. In the past we have known bursts of hot weather to come early in the year, as they can later in the year.

It is not often I find myself as a female among the privileged in society, but in this House it would seem I am among the privi-

leged. Obviously women are presumed to have better taste in dressing than men because nobody presumes to tell us what we can wear. It is accepted we will be correctly attired at all times. It is rather unfortunate that males do not have the same faith in their counterparts and they assume that if a jacket can be taken off today, who knows, next year it might be down with trousers and shorts may be allowed to be worn. Personally I think that might be a good idea, assuming the gentlemen have the legs to wear them. It may be we females in the future will have something to look at.

I suspect that in the past convention has not been concerned with women's attire because convention has been male dominated. Perhaps it was in their interests to accept that the less the women had on the better. That is usually accepted in other areas of society where men have to wear a jacket and tie and women may be seen with a strapless dress. That is not so here, and the women appear always correctly attired. Obviously I am moved to compassion. Men here are supposed to be able to debate and make rational, logical decisions; I fail to see how they can do that if they are perspiring profusely, mopping their brows, and feeling extremely uncomfortable. Men can be correctly dressed and feel comfortable, and it is time a motion such as this was supported.

I am against the amendment because times and months of the year do not necessarily equate with a heatwave. Men should have the ability to make their own decisions, and I have complete faith that if they remove their coats they will be correctly attired.

THE PRESIDENT: Before I call on Hon. P. G. Pendal who has been trying to get the call for some time, I mention in passing to honourable members that it is now 11.50 a.m., and in the time since the House first sat the atmospheric conditions have changed to warrant members being permitted to remove their coats should they so desire!

HON. P. G. PENDAL (South Central Metropolitan) [11.50 a.m.]: Originally I had been inclined to support the amendment which I knew would be moved by Hon. Vic Ferry. I am now in a position where I do not intend to support the amendment and will vote in favour of the original motion.

Without traversing the ground covered by other speakers who preceded me, perhaps the most relevant comment was made by the Leader of the Government who said, without any disrespect to the Chair, that he resented

being told by someone else when he was or was not comfortable. His comment is very much akin to my own view and to the one expressed by Hon. Garry Kelly, who said that after all is said and done it is surely better that matters of this kind go back to the question of the personal responsibility of members of this House rather than their being regimented by someone else, in this case the President.

Members may recall in their history books that there are pictures illustrating that in the 1930s, when people were working in the sustenance lines of this State, men who were putting down railway sleepers in a Government-sponsored scheme were working in the height of summer with high collars, similar to those which are worn by the senior staff members of this Parliament.

Hon. D. K. Dans: And bowler hats.

Hon. P. G. PENDAL: Indeed, they did wear hats. When I look back on those history books I find that there is nothing more absurd than people working under those conditions in January and February, in the heat of summer.

I am astonished that in our society we have not seen fashion designers in men's fashion designing our mode of dress akin to Asian countries, particularly the Philippines. In that country males dress in a business suit which is elegant and tailored attire and does not depend on the type of collar we wear, and it certainly does not depend on a tie. It amazes me that there has not been an innovative person in the Australian fashion area who has not influenced Australian males to wear something which will suit our climate and which is not akin to British tradition, which is the reason we wear collars and coats.

I grew up in an era where my father said that the only way to dress and to be in fashion was to wear a tie, and coat, and to have polished shoes. We have changed so many things for the better, but we are still stuck with what are not elegant or practical forms of dress. Perhaps the scope is there for fashion designers to come up with a design that is functional, but does not require the wearing of ties.

If this motion is passed and we find that it is abused, it is open to the House, as it is in other Standing Orders, in six months, one year or two years to say that someone is overstepping the mark and that the privileges have been abused and, as a result, the Standing Orders will be reversed and we will revert to the mode of attire that once applied.

I agree that the dignity of the House has nothing to do with the way members dress. A few weeks ago my children were in the gallery and, I am sad to say, they made derogatory comments about the way members conducted themselves, but their comments had nothing to do with the way members dressed. It is something about which we must be far more aware. People who come into the gallery observe how members conduct themselves and that is certainly what attracted my children's attention. I repeat that they were not concerned about the way the women dressed or whether the men wore coats. They were concerned about how members conducted themselves on the benches of the House and whether they paid attention to the debate.

It is my intention to oppose the amendment moved by Hon. Vic Ferry and to support the motion moved by Hon. Garry Kelly.

HON. A. A. LEWIS (Lower Central) [11.56 a.m.]: It horrifies me that we have wasted 55 minutes debating whether the male members should wear coats.

I oppose the amendment and support the motion.

Amendment put and negatived.

Question put and passed.

EDUCATION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 18 November.

HON. G. E. MASTERS (West—Leader of the Opposition) [11.57 a.m.]: I apologise for Hon. Norman Moore not being present, but he has other business.

The Opposition supports the legislation: It is a move in a direction which we, when in Government, began some years ago. Reference has been made to that in the second reading speech. This legislation is a move towards school facilities being used for community purposes.

The first move in this direction was in 1974 when the library facilities at the Carnarvon High School were made available to the community. Until that time those facilities were used solely by the pupils and the staff of the school. That was the foundation for what has happened since.

I have had personal experience with the joint use of facilities at the Lesmurdie High School. In 1975 or 1976 when the Lesmurdie High School was being constructed, I pressed that the library which was being constructed be

used as a community library. In other words, it would be used not only by the pupils, but also by the people living in the surrounding areas.

In the town in which I live the local authority provides one central library. As most members would be aware the province I represent consists of a lot of small districts and not everyone is able to get to a central point.

I can see no reason that schools in which millions of dollars have been invested should have libraries, gymnasiums and playing fields for their sole use. It is ridiculous that expensive developments of this kind should be for the use of the school only and that during the school holidays they are not used because the pupils are not there.

If there is a need for local authorities to make a contribution and to share the burden of management and construction costs and anything else that is intended, it should be accepted by the authority with some enthusiasm. There is no reason that the facilities should not be used to their maximum.

In the past it has been the practice for schools to have their own facilities and for local authorities to provide sporting facilities and the like. In other words, there has been an overlap and the move towards the use of school facilities by the community is very sensible and should be encouraged.

Earlier I made the point that when in Government we started this scheme and it is a practice which the present Government has pursued. I commend it and I hope it becomes a practice rather than something that is the exception.

HON. J. N. CALDWELL (South) [12 noon]: I wholeheartedly support this Bill. It is well known that rural areas sometimes have very few facilities for the communities and yet such facilities are present at Government schools or similar institutions. It is wonderful that the Government of the day will, when this Bill is passed, make these facilities available to the country communities. I am sure they will appreciate it and take every opportunity to use them. The National Party wholeheartedly supports the Bill.

HON. KAY HALLAHAN (South-East Metropolitan—Minister for Community Services) [12.01 p.m.]: I appreciate the support expressed by the Opposition parties. As I am in a generous mood, I do not object to the claim by the former coalition Government for some credit for the move being formalised today. I do not want to be sour and say it has been a

slow process. We shall now formalise the situation and that is a good thing.

With regard to the comments made by Mr Masters and Mr Caldwell about the under usage of Government buildings at times when schools are not used, it is good that this situation will be formalised and that there will be greater cooperation between the State Government and local government in respect of community facilities. Communities and the Government should work more closely together and this provides another vehicle for doing that. Like members of the Opposition, I think it is a good amendment and it will draw communities into the management of our large Government resources. At present many of them are feeling somewhat excluded from any management authority or involvement in those buildings and, apart from the benefits to be gained by allowing use of the buildings as they should be used, the present situation tends to alienate people from a sense of ownership and pride in them. We are doing many things with this simple amendment which will be good for local communities.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by Hon. Kay Hallahan (Minister for Community Services), and passed.

RESERVES AND LAND REVESTMENT BILL (No. 2)

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 18 November.

HON. V. J. FERRY (South-West) [12.04 p.m.]: This is the usual annual Bill which comes before the Parliament, dealing with a number of reserves throughout Western Australia. The object of the Bill is to present to the Parliament a reclassification of reserves throughout the State for one reason or another. It is very appropriate that the Bill comes before both Houses of Parliament.

As representatives of the various areas throughout the whole of the State, members have knowledge of the areas contained in

reserves and dealt with in the Bill. Therefore, it is appropriate that with this knowledge we examine the reasons why certain reserves are to be reclassified.

I have taken the opportunity to make personal inquiries in respect of a number of reserves contained in this Bill, especially those in the south-west corner of the State, some of which come within my electorate. I have also made wide-ranging inquiries regarding reserves in other parts of the State.

I am satisfied that the reclassification of the reserves contained in the Bill for the reasons stated is worthy of the attention of the House.

HON. D. J. WORDSWORTH (South) [12.06 p.m.]: I rise to support the Bill but I ask the Minister handling it to answer a few questions.

The first concerns the reserve at Corrigin which is to be sold to pay for an ambulance depot. It is said to be held under freehold title in Trust for the purpose of an ambulance depot. The reserve is to be sold so that the proceeds can be spent.

In considering this Bill we also find that the National Trust will have vested in it the old Observatory Building adjacent to Parliament House. Indeed, this land has been set aside for parliamentary and Government use. I am not against the National Trust having the building, but I ask whether it will be able to mortgage it or whether it will be possible for it to come to this House because it wants to sell the building and do something with the money. I ask the Minister what the National Trust is able to do with the building. Is it just to be given the use of it?

I further ask, who will maintain the building? Is the National Trust expected to maintain it? It is very good that the National Trust should occupy the building. Members will recall that in the past it used part of the Perth Technical College in St George's Terrace, a very small and suitable building. I hope the National Trust will be able to occupy such a large building as the Observatory. As a subscriber to the National Trust, I wonder how many \$15 subscriptions it will take to maintain the building if the National Trust is to be responsible for that.

Apart from those reservations regarding amendments, I support the Bill.

HON. P. G. PENDAL (South Central Metropolitan) [12.08 p.m.]: I support the Bill but I raise one matter with the Minister. I have

raised this matter previously when reserves Bills have been before the Parliament.

The facility available to local members of Parliament to understand what is going on within a reserves Bill is limited because successive Governments have made no provision at all to acquaint members before a Bill of this kind comes into the Parliament. I know the second reading speech touched on, in the briefest possible way, the intentions of the amending Bill in each of its clauses.

For example, I notice that one of the clauses in this reserves Bill touches on a reserve in the City of Melville. It may well be the case that for people who have little to do other than check those things for themselves, in other parliamentary environments where people have research assistance available, it is a matter of ascertaining whether or not that reserve amendment is acceptable to the local authority.

I have complained before, saying that the very least that should happen is that before the Minister introduces a Bill he should write to all of the members involved, saying, "The matter has been raised with the local authority, whose attitude is as follows: They support it, or do not support it." Then a member, who has plenty of things to do other than look out for these minute matters of detail contained in the Bill, will at least be able to breathe a sigh of relief if it shows the matter does not warrant his attention from that point on.

A department employing hundreds of people should make available the facility of alerting members, before a Bill is introduced in the Parliament, that certain reserves in his or her electorate are affected by the Bill. Not only should the attitude of the local government authority be set out in the Minister's letter, but also it should contain some more detail than we find by way of explanation in the second reading speech and the Bill itself. Anyone who refers to this Bill, as I have, will find the briefest possible indication as to why the land is being altered or alienated. That is quite inadequate.

I made this suggestion before, as far back as when the previous Government was in office, but no-one took any notice. I will continue to raise it in the forlorn hope that one day we will have a Minister for Lands who will take these matters to heart and direct an officer to spend a couple of hours each year doing as I suggest in order that members may come to the Chamber better prepared.

HON. KAY HALLAHAN (South-East Metropolitan—Minister for Community Services) [12.13 p.m.]: I am pleased to have the support of members opposite, and I have taken note of the points raised. I do not know whether Hon. David Wordsworth is prepared to allow the Bill to go through before I obtain answers to the matters he raised with regard to the National Trust, or whether we should defer the Committee stage. That is a possibility; however, I do not believe he will find the arrangements unsatisfactory because I understand there has been much consultation with either local government authorities or other organisations such as the National Trust.

I agree with the point raised by Hon. Phil Pental. A parliamentarian's life is a busy one and it is not always possible to have the resources to research matters. However, I make the point that the Government did make the documentation available to Hon. Vic Ferry quite some time ago, so it has been in the hands of Hon. Phil Pental's party for his perusal or the perusal of his staff. That is one answer, but I do take on board what he said. I share his sentiment and will certainly make the point to the Minister that a letter should be sent to members whose seats are identified, as they are now on each item. It would not be a big task, and is not too much to ask.

Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: When I was Minister, that did happen in this House. Each member affected received a copy of the material before the Bill was introduced.

Hon. KAY HALLAHAN: Members do need that support, and I will make a strong case for that to the current Minister. I agree that this is an annual Bill which rationalises land around the State by cutting off accessways no longer needed, closing roads, and making other arrangements.

With those remarks, I commend the Bill to the House.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

The Deputy Chairman of Committees (Hon. Mark Nevill) in the Chair; Hon. Kay Hallahan (Minister for Community Services) in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1: Short title—

Hon. P. G. PENDAL: Hon. David Wordsworth reminded me, and probably many other members, that when he was Minister for Lands and Forests he extended the facility of

providing to members of Parliament details of matters affecting their individual electorates prior to the reserves Bill coming before the Parliament. I am aware that in this instance a member on this side of the House has been provided with the information, but my point goes further than that. Most Opposition members are prepared to allow one of their peers to take charge of a Bill. In this case we are dealing not with broad-brush legislation but, as the Minister knows, with particular instances in members' own electorates.

In page 38 of the Committee notes tabled on 28 October and brought to my attention, a reserve in my electorate was referred to. I quote from those notes—

The City of Melville has found it necessary to construct underground drainage facilities within the reserve and has requested—

Those are the important words. The notes continue—

—that the purpose be changed to "Recreation and Drainage" to reflect this dual usage.

In line with what a previous Minister for Lands provided, that information should be conveyed to each member on an individual basis so that he is alerted to the fact that his local authority has requested such amendments. In that case, he would not need to keep much of an eye open when the reserves Bill comes before the House. People might say that it is up to the member to get access to the file of papers tabled in the Chamber at the beginning of proceedings each day. However, I took the adjournment for the Opposition on a Bill which has to do with the abolition of the Legislative Review Advisory Committee. That legislation was introduced by the Attorney General. It is interesting to talk to the people on that committee, who say they have had a very worthwhile experience doing that work over a number of years, but that the most frustrating thing—and I am sure the Attorney General is aware of this—is that no-one is aware of the work actually being done. The reports are tabled, and I have them here, but due to the pressure of time and the diversion to other things, one does not get around to obtaining the papers and finding out what the Legislative Review Advisory Committee is suggesting.

Again, that underscores my point: Everyone else is looked after. They receive back-up and service. You, Mr Deputy Chairman (Hon. Mark Nevill), in the different role you occupy

in this Chamber, have certain facilities open to you, and I believe they should be open to you. However, that sort of facility ought to be open to private members in this Chamber. The sort of information that comes to us in a passive sense ought to come in an active sense.

I will say no more, except that I believe the Minister should resume the practice instituted by Hon. David Wordsworth when he was Minister for Lands.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 2 to 17 put and passed.

Clause 18: Land vested in Her Majesty—

Hon. MARGARET McALEER: I would like to congratulate the Government, on the assumption that the legislation it proposes to introduce for the closure of rights of way and accessways will be approved. Certainly the City of Wanneroo, which figures in this Bill, has long felt a need for a process much more speedy and more related to the individual circumstances when it comes to closing rights of way. The present system is very cumbersome and I hope the future legislation will be more satisfactory.

Clause put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Report

Bill reported, without amendment, and the report adopted.

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by Hon. Kay Hallahan (Minister for Community Services), and passed.

MOTOR VEHICLE (THIRD PARTY INSURANCE) AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 18 November.

HON. D. J. WORDSWORTH (South) [12.22 p.m.]: Members would be aware that it is the usual practice for transport companies and the like to have printed on the back of their invoices the terms of the contract of the cartage of those goods.

When one examines the back of such an invoice, one often finds that there is a limitation on the value of insurance that one can claim or the terms under which one can claim it, whether the vehicle is burnt, or the goods stolen, or whatever. It is up to the transport company to decide what such terms will be. I think it is fair and reasonable that the person

who is having his goods transported should be able to read the back of that contract and decide whether those terms are acceptable to him. By the very act of consigning those goods, a person agrees to the conditions of the contract.

Anyone who has hitchhiked around the country, as I have, may be able to recall a situation similar to the one I will recount now. On one occasion I was trying to get to Perth from my electorate in Albany and I caught a lift with a man who was transporting the *Sunday Times*. Halfway to Perth, after I had thrown numerous newspapers out, he casually asked me what my occupation was and when I told him I was a member of Parliament, he was staggered. My point is that one can understand why drivers put a notice on the dashboards of their vehicles saying, "If you hitchhike in this vehicle, you do so at your own risk". They sometimes get some odd people hitching lifts with them, and although they do not mind giving lifts, they do not feel that, should there be an accident or even non-delivery, they should have full responsibility.

However, I do not think there would be much argument about whether a simple sign on the dashboard of a vehicle should be able to remove the obligation of the owner of that vehicle to provide third party cover for such a passenger, whether that passenger be a fare-payer or a hitchhiker. In this State a clause was inserted in the 1943 legislation to ensure that people could not contract out of third party obligations by either putting a sign on the dashboard of a vehicle or listing conditions on the back of an invoice.

The South Australian legislation was drawn up in the following terms—

Any contract (whether under seal or not) by virtue of which a person contracts in advance out of any right to claim damages or any other remedy for the negligence of any other person in driving a motor vehicle shall to that extent be void.

The object of this was to cover the third party, but a very bright lawyer in a 1985 High Court case, *K. & S. Lake City Freighters Pty Ltd v Gordon and Gotch Limited*, used that clause to say that the transport company was responsible for insurance and loss of goods because that legislation just quoted indeed said the contract on the back was void. This was the first time this particular clause had been interpreted in that way, and indeed it was ruled in that way by the High Court in a majority decision of four to one. Hence the States are now trying to

ensure that there is no doubt that in their legislation any person in a vehicle involved in an accident is covered in the matter of third party insurance and not the passage of goods.

The Opposition certainly has no argument with this legislation. The only trouble that members of the Opposition can see relates to retrospectivity because this legislation has retrospective effect in that one cannot go back over the last few years and say, "My goods were carried five years ago, and while you have changed the law to cover the future; I still want to use this High Court decision." I think it is understandable that there is retrospectivity in this matter and that people cannot continue to claim for past insurances of their goods because of this High Court decision.

From a historical point of view, I would quote some of the debate when the legislation was first introduced, as far as I can gather, in 1943 by the then Minister for Works, Hon. Harold Millington, MLA, who said during the debate—

The general principle laid down in the Bill is that before a license can be issued a policy of insurance must be taken out by the owner of every motor vehicle, which will cover the legal liability of any person driving the vehicle whether lawfully or unlawfully, in the event of death or bodily injury occurring to any third person. The Bill does not relate to insurance against damage to property.

In response to an interjection later, the same Minister said—

We are not proposing to insure property; the object of the Bill is to insure third party risk.

I have no doubt that the intention has always been only to cover third party and not to cover the passage of goods. I think the South Australian Act is sloppily written and the Western Australian legislation is more definite. I can understand why the Minister wishes to ensure that there is no doubt about this matter.

I have no concerns about the legislation being retrospective.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by Hon. J. M. Berinson (Attorney General), and passed.

BILLS (2): ASSENT

Message from the Governor received and read notifying assent to the following Bills—

1. Miscellaneous Repeals Bill.
2. Rural Housing (Assistance) Amendment Bill.

APPROPRIATION (CONSOLIDATED REVENUE FUND) BILL

Consideration of Tabled Paper

Debate resumed from 19 November.

HON. E. J. CHARLTON (Central) [12.31 p.m.]: Yesterday I attended a funeral service in memory of Mr Don Bannister, who was a Vice President of the Royal Agricultural Society and a farmer from the Koorda district. I want to pay tribute to a man who has done a great deal, not only for the rural industry, but for the people associated with it, and to the manner in which he carried out his responsibilities. He was an example to all people who ever had anything to do with him.

Mr Peter Carter, President of the Royal Agricultural Society, delivered the eulogy to the late Don Bannister and said something that typifies his life. He said that, to live, we all need to get as much as we can from life, but we also need to give all we can to others. I may not be accurate in reporting those words but the point was that, to live, one needs to take advantage of whatever one needs to survive and to bring up one's family. It is obvious that, to live a full life, it is not how much one can take from society but how much one can give. I think everyone should, at some time, contribute in some way, but the degree to which one contributes is extremely important.

The event yesterday was an eye-opener to me, as it was to everybody who attended the funeral. We were remembering someone whose family had pioneered the Koorda district in the early 1920s. There were no education facilities in the district at that time. We were told yesterday that the man who ended up as Vice President of the Royal Agricultural Society of Western Australia had never attended formal schooling. He received his whole education through correspondence. He seems to be one of many who had such humble education beginnings and who have reached great heights in this State.

Because he did not attend formal schooling he did not have the chance to mix with children of his own age. Obviously that is still the case for children who live in the far outback areas of this State. They still have to learn without mixing with other children. Although that has many disadvantages, it could be advantageous from the point of view of people in that situation having the opportunity to consider what they can best get from life.

The late Don Bannister left school and joined the junior farmers organisation, now the Rural Youth movement. He participated in many sporting activities, both actively and administratively.

The point I am making is that it is not what one gets out of life that is important, but what one contributes to one's own life and to the lives of others. I think we all need to remind ourselves of that and consider, in living our own lives and bringing up our families, how we can help others to do the same.

Last Friday evening I attended a speech night at Aquinas College and saw a young boy, David Regan, graduate from that school. The boy has been blind from an early age. I had the privilege of having him in my home when he was in primary school, and was extremely impressed with the boy's fortitude and with his ability to cope with the many challenges that confronted him. He is certainly a great example of what one can do when one takes the bit between one's teeth and says, "I am going to make the most of this life by achieving all I can and by trying to help the people with whom I come in contact."

In the last two days I have had those two exceptional experiences. Both were entirely different, but both were examples of how someone can make an outstanding contribution to our society.

I want to spend a few moments now reflecting on those two incidents, but relating them to our economic plight. We read about the state of the nation in the Press daily and are being constantly told how everyone has to tighten their belts to the extent that I am sick and tired of hearing it. If we tightened our belts every time we were told over the past few years, our belts would be coming through our backbones.

Hon. D. K. Dans: My belt is too tight now.

Hon. E. J. CHARLTON: I understand from what the Leader of this House said this morning that there should be a bit of room to move.

There has been a substantial increase overall in the funds allocated to the various departments in the Budget. It is quite pointless to tell people that they must tighten their belts and buy Australian, if Governments do not first set the pattern and determine the rules under which the game is to be played. People in Government, business and society as a whole will not be able to achieve the result that must be achieved in the very near future unless Governments perform. Until such time as Governments make responsible decisions, our problems will not be solved. I have made that point before and will probably repeat it to the point where I become a little more boring than usual.

It does no good for the Prime Minister and people in business to tell us that we have to do this and we have to do that. Two steps must be taken towards achieving a positive result. The first is to change the tax system in a major way. The second is to change the social security system. Although there are other very important changes that need to be made if we want to achieve our desired ends, the most important changes must be made to the taxation and social security system. All other Government responsibilities down the line can be related to those important areas. Members of Parliament—State and Federal from all parties—and all lateral thinking people must come to the conclusion that a great deal of encouragement must be given to the Government of the day to make these changes. They must do so without playing party politics.

Some of the cosmetic changes made to the taxation system have been quite pointless and without any value whatsoever. We need to give incentive to individual people to go into the workplace and perform and be rewarded for their efforts. There would then be no way that our balance of payments situation would be so unfavourable.

I totally agree with the point Mr Alan Bond made about Governments needing to make decisions. Unions also must represent their members using better methods than they have in the past. Instead of having demarcation disputes and playing off one union against the other, unions should try to improve the lot of their members. That is not done by granting union members the right to work fewer hours a week. It is not done by granting them another day off a month. It is more important that union members work an extra two or three hours a week and be paid for those hours. It is important they they be allowed to take home a greater

percentage of their pay to spend in whatever way they want.

Sitting suspended from 12.45 to 2.30 p.m.

Hon. E. J. CHARLTON: Before the luncheon suspension I was commenting about the taxation system and the lack of incentive for people in this nation to demonstrate their ability and skill. I implore members of all parties to revitalise their attention and to encourage their respective organisations across the nation to come up with some meaningful changes. We are all guilty and none more so than the National Party.

The Federal Government has shown a reluctance to make the necessary changes to the taxation system. I do not think all the rhetoric under the sun will make any difference to the present economic conditions that the people of Australia are subjected to. No-one is more persecuted economically than those wage earners at the bottom of the economic scale. They are taxed out of existence by the high rate of taxation. No incentive is being promoted by any of the parties to make up for that deficiency; instead, they try to make out to the public of Australia that they are Father Christmas to everyone, which only compounds the problems we already have.

If we go on in this way for much longer the problems will get worse. It has already happened. We are in a desperate situation but we can get out of it without too many problems at all and in a short space of time if incentives are given to people in all walks of life. The only people who benefit from the present arrangements are the entrepreneurs who are able to take advantage of the rules of the game at the expense of the genuine people.

Instead of calling on people to voluntarily demonstrate their resourcefulness and dedication, the rules should be changed so that people respond automatically. The sooner we do it the better we will all be.

I refer to our social security system which also relates to our taxation system. We have a situation where the great majority of Australians are being taxed in order to prop up people in different levels in our society. In so doing, we are persecuting those genuine people who have decided to make the best of what they have and are trying to live within the rules of the nation.

To illustrate my argument, I wish to give an example of a gentleman who came to see me recently and told me about two fellows in his shearing shed. One is married and one is not.

They each have a household and two children. One couple gets \$160 a week and the other couple gets nothing. Where is the justice in that, even though it is semi-lawful? We have a situation where a lady with two dependent children is receiving a handout from social welfare from which she can benefit, whereas the married guy and his wife have to pay tax.

We can talk about the pitfalls and anomalies in this hotchpotch of a welfare system. The situation is out of all proportion. It looks as if the Government is demonstrating to the public that it is not a caring Government any more. All Governments will do it, because they fear they will lose votes politically if they do not.

I implore all members of Parliament and political parties to start being responsible and realistic and stop dragging this nation down economically. It does no-one any good. What has happened to the spirit of Australia? It has been destroyed. That spirit means different things to different people. To someone who is religious, a spirit is a supernatural being. To someone who is not religious, it may mean the spirit of winning a game. That is how I see Australia today. We are not governed by some supernatural being who can come down and lift us out of our economic problems. It is more like a football game where we have the leader of the team saying at three-quarter time what we have to do and why. The Prime Minister should be saying we should all get out and work harder and stand tall rather than his saying he will fix things. We need that spirit which is found in a football game, where in the last five minutes a team scores a goal, wins the game and becomes the premiers. There is a reward for all their hard work and that is why they do it.

We have to give the people of this nation that incentive to which they can respond. They should be able to hold their own and not be subjected to the ridicule forced upon them by people around the world at this time.

We have deficiencies in our society with respect to law and order, the police, education, and some of our water requirements. I will firstly refer to the police situation. We have seen in the Budget an allocation for an increase in the Police Force. Now, after the decision of the arbitration court, the police have been given a 38-hour week to which I am opposed. It will achieve nothing.

Because of the responsibilities the police have to fulfil, a decision was made some time ago to close the one-man stations in many of

our country towns. However, no-one has ever been able to demonstrate to me that the police officers in those one-man stations were subjected to any additional stress because they were operating alone. I implore the Government, especially the Minister for Budget Management, to ensure that the introduction of the 38-hour week for the Police Force will not mean the complete end of one-man police stations.

Good reasons can be found for opening more one-man police stations. I could cite communities where such stations were closed by the previous Government and where documentary evidence shows that the incidence of crimes such as breaking and entering, and certainly many juvenile crimes, has increased considerably. It is no criticism of the police to say that usually when they arrive the offender has disappeared from the scene.

It is not even necessary that a community have a police station in the town. What is at least needed is for a police officer attached to a neighbouring station to be housed in the community because his mere presence is of assistance. Immediately it will be said that he will have to suffer being at the beck and call of everyone in the town. But the people living in country towns know that a Government employee is not at the beck and call of the local community when he or she is off duty; they understand that. His presence, however, would demonstrate two things: One is that he has the support of the locals, and the second is that he discourages the people who might otherwise consider breaking the law—something they might have done had they known no police officer was in the community. I ask the Government to take note of this. The Government is continually receiving deputations on this point and, indeed, I am involved with one at the moment. It is high time that country communities had a police presence.

It will be said by some people that we cannot tell people where to live, but that is a fallacy, because police officers, for example, can be encouraged to live in various communities if they are provided with reasonable facilities such as schools for their children. This would not change the economy of a particular area but it would change for the better the sense of wellbeing of the people to know that a police officer was one of their community.

Another point related to the Police Force is that when it calls for applications from young people to join the force, once the applicants have gone through the vetting procedure they

are placed on call for a later intake. However, if a successful applicant has not been called up for an intake within 12 months, that person is then forced to reapply to join the Police Force and to go through the same procedures. A person who has his or her heart set on becoming a police officer and who has passed all the requirements should not be left in limbo, perhaps to be told it will be necessary to reapply after 12 months. This is no incentive for them to continue their desire to be police officers. This situation is not something that young people should suffer, and I believe it should be addressed.

I wish to make a couple of points about education, and I understand the financial constraints faced by the Government in this area and its needs to prune costs. I have been agreeable to some of the cuts the Government has made in the education area and to its move to put more teachers into the field throughout the State.

An area of concern I have relates to country high school hostels. I believe that the staff of these hostels should be paid by the Education Department. Country people are finding that it costs as much to send their children to Government and other hostels in the country as it is to send their children to boarding schools. In most areas, these country people have no alternative other than to do as the gentleman I referred to this morning does and keep their children home to study by correspondence because of the costs involved.

Another point that should be considered seriously, not just by the Government but by all decision makers, is the tendency of our young people upon leaving school immediately to enter into courses at tertiary institutions. It would be far better for the individuals and the nation as a whole were these young people first to enter the work force for a year or two in order to learn something of the real world.

This morning I had the pleasure during the meeting of the Standing Committee on Government Agencies to hear a representative of our post-education organisation. He indicated that the failure rate in examinations of young people who go directly from school into tertiary institutions is as much as 30 per cent. That figure compares badly when we consider people who first go into the workplace and later desire to undertake some form of tertiary study, where the success rate is phenomenally high. These people have had the opportunity of finding out a little of how the world goes round.

We have far too many people concerned about academic rather than practical things—people who have not learnt how to earn a responsible living. We have people in tertiary institutions who come out at the end of their courses without any knowledge of how the world goes round. Obviously a change cannot be made overnight, but all people in responsible positions should try to turn the situation around. Certainly the Federal Government encourages school leavers to go straight into tertiary institutions simply because of the grants it allocates for this purpose. We need to change this sort of thinking. Other countries encourage school leavers to first enter the workplace to gain some practical experience of the real world.

A good example is the nursing profession. Some people have a fairly black and white opinion about this, but my experience is that one of the problems with the nursing profession today is that its members go through what is largely an academic preparation. When they enter the workplace they find people who are actually ill and are in need of more than medication; what they need as much as anything else are people who understand human relationships. A person who can assist the ill by giving them the will to get better, to feel better in themselves, to help them in the right direction, is as important or even more important than anything that might come from academic training.

I know that the nation is involved in the lead-up to the 1988 bicentennial celebrations and many State organisations are involved. This is one area in which there has been a terrible waste of resources. It will be great in 1988 to see new entrances to parks and new brick facades on buildings—there are many examples of projects throughout this State—but they will all be luxuries that the nation cannot afford.

I am not critical of the way in which the money has been allocated, but the Federal Government has gone down the wrong path. We have seen large sums of money paid to people involved, and it is a waste in this economic climate. It is a shame that we will see the result of 200 years of settlement in Australia in some of these wasteful projects.

A subject which comes up many times during the year is the provision of water to country areas. The economic situation in country areas has been well documented, and members are aware of it. What concerns me is the increase in water charges, and I am well aware that the

country areas water supply runs at a great loss. We all have our reasons for this.

As a result of the fall in population in the country areas because of the rural crisis, many country local authorities are making decisions not to water grassed sporting facilities in view of the increase in water charges. Local authorities cater for all kinds of sport such as tennis and football. I ask members to consider what this will do to the people who live in country areas.

There is a male-dominated population among the young people in the country because there is less opportunity for females. The males do not get any financial reward for the work they do. It is difficult for them because they know that people of their age who work in the iron ore industry are receiving between \$500 and \$1 000 a week, and they are just getting enough to live on. The only thing that keeps them in the country, apart from their work, is the sporting events which take place on the weekends. However, the condition of the ovals on which they play their sport is declining because of the lack of water.

People in the metropolitan area are provided with well-kept sporting facilities, and they do not think of the people in the country.

Local authorities in the country which are reliant on scheme water have found that they have had to cut back on their water usage. I have written to every shire in my electorate and have received replies advising me of the various water restrictions they have had to impose.

Last week I visited Westonia with the Minister, and I compliment him on his ability to understand the local people. I hope he has the support of his colleagues in Cabinet, particularly the Minister for Budget Management, and that they will understand that there is a need to provide funds for the provision of water to country areas. I am not saying that the Government will have to find extra money. I am sensible enough to know that there will need to be cutbacks in other areas. We need suggestions on how that can be done.

Staff from Government departments are saying to people in the country, "Why don't you build a dam?" They are not aware that in only one year in every 10 years there would be sufficient rainfall to fill a dam. A dam would be built tomorrow if we had the rainfall to justify it.

At Wickepin there is a railway dam, but the water in it is not suitable for human consumption. The Water Authority is not in favour of

allowing the local authority to use water from the dam on its oval. Therefore, the five cricket teams in the area do not have a grassed playing field.

Hon. P. H. Lockyer: What is their excuse?

Hon. E. J. CHARLTON: The excuse is that there is not enough water to supplement the scheme water. It is a ridiculous situation when one considers that there is a dam which is not used for most of the year, but the water is not to be used on the oval. A deputation to the Minister is pending and I hope it will be successful.

It is very easy for people in the metropolitan area because they see sprinklers on the ovals and they think that everything is hunky-dory. Several communities are suffering because of the situation, and there is a genuine need to investigate these matters to ascertain whether there is a problem. If there is, something will have to be done about it. I repeat that I am not asking the Government to allocate extra funds because I am sure that cuts can be implemented in other areas.

We hear the same old story every year in Western Australia about the water supply, yet successive Governments throughout the ages, certainly since the 1960s, have spent little on the development of new water supplies. In a State such as this we should be spending between \$10 million and \$20 million a year on the development of new water supplies or on the extension of water supplies. Nothing is being done. That is the reason it is easy for people who live in the country to say that because those who live in the country are in the minority, nothing will be done about their water supply.

Governments should consider the contribution made by country people to the economy of this State. It far outweighs the cost of providing a suitable water supply for the country. The Water Authority keeps coming back to the cost benefit. It says that it will cost \$70 million for a water supply, but it will receive only \$10 million in return. It does not take into account that the country is producing grain, wool, and minerals.

The mining companies are subjected to horrendous capital costs for extensions to water supplies. In the Perth sedimentary basin west of Watheroo, the Agaton water supply has been financed by the Government and is ready to go. It has the capacity to cater for our needs. We have a 10 per cent unemployment rate, and we

have the resources and technology to provide a proper water supply.

My son, who has just finished his exams, said to me this morning that he went cable-skiing and he was surprised at the number of people who were there. I go back to a point I made earlier; that is, the young people could be paid a salary to gain experience and to ascertain what is going on.

I will advise members of an example where a Westrek programme for unemployed people was undertaken at Nungarin earlier this year. The people involved now want to live in that country town permanently. I do not think the Government is aware of the potential of the young people, and they are being denigrated and referred to as layabouts.

We have a lot of land, half of it untouched, which could be developed for the good of everybody. Yet we are sitting back and saying that it is not right to make these people work and that they should not have to do anything. We are penalising those in the work force and we are breeding a race of indifferent people who are becoming so because they do not have the opportunity to become involved.

The crux of the matter is the taxation system and the social security system. All members of all parties have been too weak; they have not been prepared to stand up and be counted; they have not been prepared to bite the bullet and make a few hard decisions. It is not a matter of overnight change but of making the first decision to give people an incentive.

When people ask me what I think should be done about these problems, I tell them that we should start with taxation and social security. Everything else comes a poor second. Not one individual has questioned that view once having stopped and thought about it. They have asked why we do not do something about it. I hope that we can do something about it and that at our party meetings, in Western Australia and in Canberra, and wherever we get the opportunity, we put our minds to trying to implement changes in those two areas as a starting point.

We must change the way this nation is going and return to the spirit of Australia. We need to be able to say what a great nation this is and what a great sporting nation it is. Of course, we do not have to be reminded that Australia has not been going too well lately in that area but I hope we shall win the America's Cup. With a bit of spirit and a few million dollars we might be able to do that. However in most cases we

do not have \$1 million. We need to revive this spirit and in order to do so we must offer incentives for people to be responsible for their own actions and encourage them to get out and perform.

HON. A. A. LEWIS (Lower Central) [3.03 p.m.]: I congratulate the previous speaker for putting more motherhood clichés in one 45-minute speech than I have ever heard before.

Hon. E. J. Charlton: Is that a compliment?

Hon. A. A. LEWIS: It is amazing that we have Budget papers of this kind. If this Government were so good, it would not need to advertise its Budget highlights on four pages of the *Sunday Times*. Also, the photograph of the Attorney General is not very good; he is not wearing his glasses. The only other bloke whose picture I saw in the paper like this was Hon. Robert Pike and we know where he is now. Hon. Joe Berinson looks as if he is going down the same track with the Government.

Hon. D. K. Dans: Is my photograph in?

Hon. A. A. LEWIS: Unfortunately no, the Leader of the House does not know enough about Budgets to rate.

With regard to this piece of nonsense put out by the Treasurer and the Minister for Budget Management, we hear much talk about saving money and Hon. Eric Charlton talked about tightening the belt; yet, we have this four-page advertisement. The Federal Government is following Hon. Joe Berinson's lead and putting page after page of nonsensical advertisements in the newspaper about the fringe benefits tax.

Hon. Fred McKenzie: You have to keep the people informed and not keep them in the dark.

Hon. A. A. LEWIS: That is a very good interjection. The Federal Government is keeping us informed about the fringe benefits tax.

Hon. B. L. Jones: They have to get over the misinformation on the fringe benefits tax.

Hon. A. A. LEWIS: I can see the Minister for Budget Management cringing because of the help given by his backbenchers. This is the most horrific tax introduced in Australia. It is the first time that employers have been required to pay tax for the employee on a wide range of things. The greatest con job happened the other day in this connection.

Hon. Mark Nevill: Who pays your taxes?

Hon. A. A. LEWIS: It comes out of my money. Hon. Mark Nevill should not try to push this horrendous tax, because really it is a lot of nonsense.

Hon. Mark Nevill: You are speaking nonsense.

Hon. A. A. LEWIS: No, I am not. Hawke did the dirty on Keating when he was overseas and Keating came back and gave—

Hon. Mark Nevill: That should be the honourable Mr Hawke and the honourable Mr Keating.

Hon. A. A. LEWIS: The horrible Mr Hawke and the horrible Mr Keating. The problem is that we have got rid of log books.

Hon. P. G. Pandal: Now we need to get rid of the logs.

Hon. A. A. LEWIS: The two logs will go at the next election.

Hon. B. L. Jones interjected.

Hon. A. A. LEWIS: I think the member has it wrong. I think she should read the Bill more succinctly than that. We have got rid of the log books but we still need to justify every bit of expenditure.

Hon. Fred McKenzie: No.

Hon. A. A. LEWIS: I advise members to keep their log books; they will still be self-assessing and will be liable for six years.

A Government member: Who have you been talking to?

Hon. A. A. LEWIS: I have been listening to Mr Keating; not to what is reported in the newspapers but to what he says in the Parliament. Are Government members denying that this is the case?

Hon. Mark Nevill: Of course we are.

Hon. A. A. LEWIS: I ask Hon. Mark Nevill to please go to the public and tell them that they do not have to self-assess and that they are not liable for six years. The Federal Government says that they are. This removal of the need for a log book is the greatest con trick in taxation ever played on the Australian people.

Hon. Mark Nevill: Should we bring it back?

Hon. A. A. LEWIS: It would be far fairer to bring it back. I know that the Labor Party members do not like the log book because they have never been able to fill anything in.

Several members interjected.

Hon. A. A. LEWIS: About four or five members might be able to fill me in but I will get Hon. Phil Lockyer on my side and he will be helping with a north-west settlement.

On a different subject, is it not marvellous to watch the unions getting hit between the eyes with an ambit claim? Peko Wallsend has sub-

mitted an ambit claim such as the unions have been trying on with employers for years. The unions have squealed like stuck pigs. They have yelled, screamed and gone running all over the place because they do not know what the hell has hit them. It is fascinating that the situation has been turned around and the unions have been hit.

Those members who have been in this place for some years will remember Hon. Des Dans, when talking about the transport union, saying that it was only an ambit claim and that we should not worry about it. I would say to the unions that Mr Copeman has only put in an ambit claim and they should not worry about it. Hon. Tom Butler should not interject either because he was not here and he did not hear Hon. Des Dans making those statements. It was fascinating.

Do you, Sir, know why the unions are jumping backwards and forwards?

Hon. T. G. Butler: Do you support Andrew Hay?

Hon. A. A. LEWIS: I did not say anything about that. I think Mr Hay goes off about as fast as Mr Butler and many others in the union movement.

Hon. John Halden: Copeman is a left-winger!

Hon. A. A. LEWIS: He probably is, compared with Andrew Hay, but some of us cannot understand how the Labor Party organises itself. My good friend Mr Fred McKenzie says he is a left-winger, and on the broad left, and apparently that is the best part of the Labor Party. It is the only one that sticks to its principles, and knowing Mr McKenzie, I know that to be right. But there are so many parts of the Labor Party that it is like placing a football team—there is the left back, left half back, right back, and so on.

Hon. P. G. Pandal: The rearguard and the mudguard.

Hon. A. A. LEWIS: That is exactly right. Do members know why the unions are so worried about Mr Copeman?

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Order! Hon. John Halden will stop interjecting.

Hon. A. A. LEWIS: The reason the unions are all worried is probably that their money is wrapped up in Peko Wallsend. The ALP talks about big business, and I think I heard on my loudspeaker downstairs Hon. Tom Butler, like most of the Labor Party members following his

leader, getting stuck into a bloke called Ric New.

Hon. T. G. Butler: I did not get stuck into Ric New.

Hon. A. A. LEWIS: Hon. Tom Butler did get stuck into him, yet he cannot take it himself.

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Order!

Hon. A. A. LEWIS: Listen to this, Mr President. The Labor Party gets stuck into Ric New and all the big businesses, but let us talk about the amount of money unions have.

In 1975 the Metalworkers Union had accumulated funds of \$1.9 million. Do members know what that union's accumulated funds were in 1985-1986? It had \$14.5 million. That is 10 times as much, in 10 years. In the same period the Miscellaneous Workers Union's accumulated funds rose from \$830 000 to \$14.2 million. The Federated Ironworkers Union, which is a big union, had accumulated funds of \$1.5 million at the beginning of that period and \$11.9 million at the end.

Hon. T. G. Butler: That is a big union.

Hon. A. A. LEWIS: It is half the size of the Miscellaneous Workers Union in numbers, yet only a couple of million dollars and only 10 per cent behind as regards its amount of accumulated funds. The Australian Workers Union is the only dinkum union, because I was a member of it. It looks after its members; it does not try to play funny games, as Hon. Tom Butler does. That union's accumulated funds rose from \$4.6 million to \$9.6 million, which is only just double. The painters union is not listed here because someone has absconded with the funds.

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Order!

Hon. Graham Edwards: Over what period were those funds accumulated?

Hon. A. A. LEWIS: Over 10 years. I am not against unions having money, but Labor members should not talk in this place about the Ric News and people who allegedly offer the Liberal Party money, when the unions are making this type of money and passing the interest from it into Labor Party funds. They cannot take it when it is given back to them; they must interject and play around the whole time.

A Government member: Are they assets or accumulated funds?

Hon. A. A. LEWIS: They are accumulated funds.

I will now address the serious situation of the plight of country businesses. This Government will do nothing about it. Two surveys have been done, the second of which, according to the Deputy Premier, went to the Cabinet in May; yet nothing has been done about it. The Government is prepared to let country businesses go to the wall in a wholesale manner. There are enough farmers in this place to deal with the problems of farmers, but rural businesses are being slaughtered unmercifully by this Government.

The Farm Machinery Dealers Association conducts an annual survey entitled "The Cost of Doing Business", and the results of its last survey are horrific, to say the least. For instance, the net profit in 1984-85 of a farm machinery business was, on average, \$75 000; in 1985-86 it was a loss of \$35 000. In other words, the net result went back \$110 000 in one year.

Hon. Mark Nevill: Farmers must have got some cheap machinery.

Hon. A. A. LEWIS: That is the only constructive thing Mr Nevill can say. Unfortunately the farmers are not buying anything, the Labor Party Ministers will not respond, Mr Keating has received about four different suggestions from both the tractor manufacturers and the dealers, yet will not listen to them, and suggestions have been put to the State Government by committees set up by the dealers, yet has done nothing. It is about time this was drawn to the public's attention.

I refer again to "The Cost of Doing Business". In sectors where the turnover is under \$2 million, the profits in 1984-85 were \$25 000, and in 1985-86, \$1 000. For businesses with a turnover of between \$2 million and \$4 million, in 1984-85 there was an average profit of \$24 600, and in 1985-86 an average loss of nearly \$80 000. In the category of firms with a turnover of more than \$4 million, the average profit in 1984-85 was \$144 000, and in 1985-86 that fell to \$57 753. New whole goods sales fell on average from \$1.8 million to \$1.2 million. Used machinery sales dropped from \$634 000 to \$567 000.

It was interesting to note in relation to used machinery that that was one of the areas where people felt machinery dealers did not do the right thing and so suffered losses. Having conducted a number of these surveys, I know those losses could be up to \$500 000 or \$750 000,

and dealers could be virtually eliminated. The tightening of the management was very noticeable. The geniuses tell us that the whole problem of country business is their management, but I challenge them to show the farm machinery dealers how to manage their businesses better.

The liabilities of the firms have dropped, but the owner's equity has dropped, and the average overall owner's equity is 23.3 per cent of the business. In the under \$2 million bracket they own only 19.66 per cent—less than one-fifth of the business is theirs. The \$2 million to \$4 million bracket looks like an advertisement for selling used cars; owners have 15.45 per cent of the business. It goes without saying that the interest bill for the two groups went up by 33.3 per cent and 120 per cent respectively.

The Federal Government is holding up interest rates in this country. If it is going to do that it must at the same time subsidise those areas which are producing the wealth of Australia. The State Government has subsidised home owners, but they will not get us out of our financial problems. The miners, farmers, and the service industries to those groups will get us out of our problems.

[Quorum formed.]

Hon. A. A. LEWIS: That is the only way we can pull those areas out of the serious plight they are in.

It is extremely interesting to make a comparison of the figures for farm machinery dealers in the United States in 1985 and for Australian dealers in 1985-86. Our equipment sales are about 20 per cent higher, but parts sales are down 10 per cent. Margins are up on equipment, but down drastically on parts and service labour. The Australian dealer carrying the same amount of stock and having the same amount of real estate with the same indebtedness is \$60 000 worse off than his US counterpart. That is the difference interest rates have made to the same sized business in Australia and the US. That shows where the problems are in Australian rural businesses and country areas.

It was very interesting to hear the claptrap by Kerin, Dawkins and others about American wheat sales. Kerin and Dawkins went public; they knew the score and they knew that the world demand for wheat had dropped by 22 million tonnes, yet they tried to embarrass the US as much as they could for no good reason. Many years ago when wheat quotas were introduced in 1969-70, the head of Sperry Cor-

poration, the late Jack Scott, whom I think you would remember, Mr President, said in a speech in this State that the US had cut the amount of crop it had put in and stored abnormal amounts of grain. At the time that the US was cutting crops and storing big amounts of wheat Australia increased its plantings by 50 per cent. So Australian wheat farmers grew on the back of the American Treasury.

Mr Scott said in a speech in early 1971 that this could not go on; but it did. This year the crunch has come; this year we have to start facing the truth.

I have a couple of interesting snippets for members. The *British Agricultural News* of August 1986 refers to a genetically engineered wheat which will grow in saline soils. We thought that losing 2 000 hectares a year in Western Australia put us in pretty bad shape, but in Pakistan one hectare of canal irrigation land is lost to agriculture every 12 minutes due to salt in the soil. The economic cost of that loss is 300 million pounds annually. Let us hope we in Australia can pick up some of that scientific research which has produced a genetically engineered wheat and do something with our saline soils.

In *The West Australian* of Saturday, 18 October, the Premier was quoted as saying this in another place—

When the Legislative Council moves to set up a committee do you think it does so because it wants a fair and objective and independent assessment of the matter?

I would like to answer the Premier. In most cases yes, this Council sets up committees to get a fair assessment. All the committees on which I have had the pleasure of serving in this place have been non-political and have worked at their job. Admittedly, in the main I have had Labor Party members from the far left like Hon. Fred McKenzie, Hon. Ron Leeson, Hon. Grace Vaughan—

Hon. D. K. Dans: What do you mean by the "far left"?

Hon. A. A. LEWIS: The far, far left; broad left, if you like, Mr Dans. I do not want to embarrass the Leader of the House because the quinella might still be running.

Hon. D. K. Dans: What quinella is that?

Hon. A. A. LEWIS: The one Mr Lockyer spoke of this morning in relation to Mr Dans and I stripping off our coats.

Hon. D. K. Dans: I don't get it.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The honourable member should keep addressing the Chair, and we will go on nicely.

Hon. D. K. Dans: As soft as you like and as long as you like.

Hon. A. A. LEWIS: I thank Mr Dans. It will not be long because I believe the Labor Party is on the skids. It must be on the skids when the *Sunday Times* of 28 September has to put Hon. Tom Butler on the front page looking very worried in a photo four times the size of the Premier's picture, warning about faction fighting between the unions and the Burke Government. This Government has got itself into trouble with everybody. It is trying to use the New Right as its object. The Government has upset the schoolteachers, the nurses, the farmers, and rural business. Who else? Everybody!

Poor old Arthur Tonkin! That man—

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order! If this House does not come to order I will get upset.

Hon. A. A. LEWIS: We would hate to see that, Sir, on a Thursday afternoon.

Hon. P. G. Pandal: It is the President's birthday today.

Hon. D. K. Dans: Perhaps he should make a speech.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon. A. A. LEWIS: I was just indicating how Hon. Tom Butler picked up the piece that the Burke Government was sliding. I do not think the photograph in the *Sunday Times* does him much credit. It does not show much of his grey hair. The key part of Hon. Tom Butler's speech was picked out by John Hormon and put into the article. The article said that the State President of the ALP warned about this matter—

Hon. T. G. Butler interjected.

Hon. A. A. LEWIS: I think that is a rude and unparliamentary interjection. Mr Butler has obviously said that there was trouble and he made a speech which was reported; now he is criticising the Press for picking up what he has said. I think Hon. Tom Butler should move over and let the Broad Left take over because at least it has some ideological basis with which to look after the Labor Party. I am sure Hon. Fred McKenzie would agree with me.

On 30 September the ALP is reported to have agreed to another big structural change. It is trying everything it can to survive. The policies of this Government have got it into

trouble. The polls indicate that the Budget has got this Government into trouble.

Hon. J. M. Berinson: Which polls are you referring to?

Hon. A. A. LEWIS: Polls in papers day after day. I am sorry the Attorney General does not have the time to read them or cannot understand them, but it is pretty obvious that as far as budget management is concerned he will have to learn some more about figures because based on his knowledge of budget management and his knowledge of polls, the Government will really go down the gurgler. This Budget would be the worst exercise in budget management that I have ever seen. It is really only all about more advisers and more money.

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon. A. A. LEWIS: Under this Government the overseas debt is up to \$80 billion. The year before last the Department of Conservation and Land Management was promised a great deal of money, and yet this has come to nothing. In real terms all we see is a cut. The people in that department have been doing a magnificent job and yet funding has been taken away from them, as has money for the forestry section. In fact that money has been diverted into nature reserves and national parks.

While on that particular matter I would comment on a report by AMEC—the Association of Mining and Exploration Companies. In an editorial of 3 September AMEC commented about the lack of geological input into resources exploration into the Lane-Poole, Shannon, and D'Entrecasteaux National Parks. I believe AMEC is extremely well informed. Although the Premier might not like committees of this House, AMEC referred to a recommendation put forward in the 1981 report of the Select Committee of the Legislative Council on national parks. It was a pretty good report as I recall.

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order! If we had fewer interjections, the member, who said 20 minutes ago that he was just about finished, would be able to finish.

Hon. A. A. LEWIS: I quite agree with you, Sir.

The PRESIDENT: Then stop causing the interjections.

Hon. A. A. LEWIS: What the Budget has not really addressed are the problems which must be addressed in the State. The Budget is

proving to be an embarrassment because the State Government has shown that it is not willing to bite the bullet. It has shown that it does not really want to get on with the job of governing and it is not prepared to say these are the lines the State is going to go along. The Government has had an ad hoc shot at setting up committees and advisers, trying with all its strength, which is waning at the moment, to find some way out of the financial mess it is in. There is one way out of this financial mess and that is good budgeting.

The Government can sell the Western Australian Development Corporation's false figures and the false figures of Exim—and it might be able to take possession of the \$50 000 tractor waiting for it in Saudi Arabia. It is time for this Government to get on with its business and to stop talking. We have heard the rhetoric and had the Press statements. The Government should get down to doing something for Western Australia.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Hon. P. H. Lockyer.

PAY-ROLL TAX ASSESSMENT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 3)

Assembly's Message

Message from the Assembly received notifying that it had agreed to the amendment requested by the Legislative Council.

The PRESIDENT: I would just say to honourable members that at 3.45 p.m. the House rises for afternoon tea and as all members would be aware, on 20 November 1928 a very important event occurred. In order to celebrate that event, afternoon tea will be served in the President's corridor at 3.45 p.m.

LAND TAX AMENDMENT BILL

Receipt and First Reading

Bill received from the Assembly; and, on motion by Hon. J. M. Berinson (Minister for Budget Management), read a first time.

Second Reading

HON. J. M. BERINSON (North Central Metropolitan—Minister for Budget Management) [3.38 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill is the culmination of a long and thorough review by the Government of the impact of land tax on owners of land.

The measures now proposed to restructure the tax scale provide long-term relief for all taxpayers and are the first to be implemented by any Government in almost 10 years. Although the Land Tax Act was enacted in 1976, the scale of tax rates adopted at that time was taken from the previous 1968 legislation. Relief was provided for some taxpayers in 1976, but the tax scale proposed to be restructured now has in effect remained unaltered for nearly 20 years.

The Bill proposes the introduction of a new scale to apply in 1987-88 and subsequent years. The application of this new scale will result in the provision of tax relief of nearly \$11 million in the first year of introduction and more in subsequent years. The new rates will provide land tax relief across the board. Every taxpayer will benefit.

The problem of large increases in land tax assessments following a revaluation has been addressed in the construction of the new scale. It sets down rates which are lower than those presently in the Act, and it contains fewer steps and wider valuation ranges.

In particular, the new scale includes—

10 rate steps compared with the 18 in the existing scale;

a maximum rate of 2c in the dollar for land holdings valued in excess of \$150 000 compared with the existing 2.4c in the dollar at \$120 000; and

valuation ranges for each step in the scale which have been expanded to double, and in a few cases treble, those in the current scale.

Under the new scale, the tax payable for land holdings will be up to 11.4 per cent lower than would have been the case under the old scale with the 10 per cent rebate in operation, or up to some 19.2 per cent lower than under the old scale without the rebate.

For the average taxpayer, the new lower rate scale will reduce land tax payable by eight per cent in 1987-88, or more than 14 per cent in real terms.

This comprehensive overhaul of the land tax scale also provides for exemption from land tax of holdings having a value of less than \$5 000. This is expected to remove the obligation to pay land tax from about 7 000 owners.

Pending the introduction of the new rates scale in 1987-88, the 10 per cent rebate on all land tax assessments, which was introduced in 1985-86, will continue in 1986-87.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Hon. G. E. Masters (Leader of the Opposition).

LAND TAX ASSESSMENT AMENDMENT BILL

Receipt and First Reading

Bill received from the Assembly; and, on motion by Hon. J. M. Berinson (Minister for Budget Management), read a first time.

Second Reading

HON. J. M. BERINSON (North Central Metropolitan—Minister for Budget Management) [3.40 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The Bill proposes a number of minor amendments to the Land Tax Assessment Act. Two of the amendments are complementary to the major rearrangement of the land tax rates scale contained in the Land Tax Amendment Bill 1986.

One amendment makes it clear that no land tax is payable in respect of the land holdings of an owner having an aggregate value of less than \$5 000. The other provides for the present 10 per cent rebate to be discontinued on the commencement of the new rates scale in 1987-88.

At present, the Commissioner of State Taxation may allow a taxpayer an extension of time for the payment of his land tax assessment and may permit the amount due to be paid by way of instalments.

These provisions also permit interest to be charged up to a maximum of 10 per cent per annum where payment of an assessment is so deferred.

The 10 per cent maximum has been in place since 1970. It is now inadequate having regard to usual commercial rates, and the Bill proposes that the maximum interest rate be increased to 20 per cent per annum.

That increase will bring the Land Tax Assessment Act into line with the Pay-roll Tax Assessment Act where interest to a maximum of 20 per cent is chargeable on deferred payroll tax payments.

The remaining measures in the Bill are intended to—

Provide a method for calculating the unimproved value of a portion of a property which belongs to the Crown or any local authority, statutory authority, etc., but which is used by a person who is liable for land tax. Currently, the Act makes it clear

that the person is liable but provides no guidance as to how the liability is to be calculated. This omission is rectified by the amendments;

allow land tax to be recovered either jointly or individually from joint owners;

provide for appeals against the exercise of the discretion conferred on the Commissioner of State Taxation to be made to the Minister responsible for the Act. Currently appeals must be made to the Treasurer; and

authorise the State Taxation Department's longstanding practice of calculating a proportionate land tax exemption by applying the proportion to the valuation of the property involved rather than to the amount of tax which would be assessed if there were no proportionate exemption. Differences in the land tax assessment arise from application of the two alternatives because of the progressive taxation scale.

In summary, these measures improve the machinery provision of the Act or remove anomalies and provide for increased concession to smaller taxpayers.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Hon. Max Evans.

Sitting suspended from 3.45 to 4.10 p.m.

[Questions taken.]

SALE OF GOODS (VIENNA CONVENTION) BILL

In Committee

The Deputy Chairman of Committees (Hon. Robert Hetherington) in the Chair; Hon. Kay Hallahan (Minister for Community Services) in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1: Short title—

Hon. KAY HALLAHAN: I take the opportunity at this stage to answer some questions raised during the second reading debate. It has been interesting to read some of the additional information provided.

The main purpose of the Bill is to overcome longstanding uncertainty experienced in the international business community over laws which are applicable to international contracts. Under our system we have contracts and principles whereas countries such as West Germany have codes, and the international business

community has had a need to formalise matters such as whether or not a breach has occurred.

Under our system, if an offer is made and then a counter offer is made, really in rejection of the first offer, it has been unclear whether that has been a rejection or just an extension of the offer until the negotiation has been clarified. International trade has been plagued by ambiguities in this area, something this Bill sets out to clear up. This lack of understanding and clarity about contracts of sale is to be sorted out.

The legislation was referred to the Department of Consumer Affairs because we have a Bills of Sale Act which had to be considered.

Hon. Norman Moore asked what countries were involved in accepting this convention. At present they are Argentina, Egypt, France, Hungary, Lesotho, Syria, Yugoslavia, and Zambia. The United States is expected to be a party to the convention and Australia will become a party to it when all our States have passed the necessary legislation. The convention will come into effect only when 10 countries have signed it; at present only eight have. I do not know how far the United States has progressed. In Australia, Queensland has had legislation applying right through all this process, the legislation having been assented to on 15 September.

The South Australian and Victorian Parliaments have introduced Bills, as has Western Australia. There is more information available, but the problem relates to the uncertainty about the nature of contracts and what laws should apply. I think those comments overcome the problem.

Hon. N. F. MOORE: I take this opportunity to commend Hon. Kay Hallahan on the way in which she has approached this legislation. She has been very diligent in answering questions raised by members in this Chamber. On several occasions I have asked her to provide me with further information about certain matters, and she has been very forthcoming. What she has done today underlines her diligent approach to her responsibilities in this Chamber. I thank her for the information.

Hon. Fred McKenzie: She does women proud.

Hon. N. F. MOORE: She does. I find it hard to be complimentary all the time and therefore, having read the debates in the other place, may I suggest that the Minister send a copy of her remarks to the Minister in charge of the legis-

lation so he too knows what the Bill is all about.

Hon. P. G. PENDAL: I raise a matter in relation to the list the Minister referred to a few moments ago. I refer to a decision of the High Court in relation to the Franklin Dam case. It was based on the world heritage listing that grew out of the relevant United Nations organisations. Some members of this Chamber would have attended the Adelaide meetings of the Constitutional Convention that occurred about a month before or after that High Court decision. That decision was very much bound up with the international conventions of the type we are talking about.

People were horrified to learn that Australia was being guided in that matter by such enlightened countries as Libya, Bulgaria, and seven or eight other countries, none of which readily springs to mind as being a country well known in the international community for the recognition of human rights. It was interesting to hear the Minister read the list of countries where the convention, the subject of this Bill, now applies. Those countries include Argentina; Hungary—and I am only reading those which I can instantly recognise as being less than free countries—Lesotho; I am not sure about Syria; Yugoslavia; and Zambia.

The point I make—obviously not one to interfere with the passage of this legislation—is that it is of continuing interest to me that we are becoming parties to international covenants signed by countries of that ilk.

Governments of both political persuasions in the Federal sphere have been guilty of that, because it was the Fraser Government which allowed the convention which was ultimately applied in the case of the Franklin River. I suppose one can be encouraged to think that if a State like Queensland, which has taken a pretty conservative view of these matters, is prepared to pass this legislation—which it has done—then there is probably not too much wrong with it.

At least the Federal Government is to be commended for having reserved agreement on these matters where it involves Australian domestic law and that those matters have at least been referred to the State Parliaments. I am not sure if this has been done on many occasions before. It might be the first occasion it has happened in Western Australia. To that extent, I commend the Government.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 2 to 6 put and passed.

New clause—

Hon. KAY HALLAHAN: We have a situation where an error has occurred. Apparently the Attorneys General met in December 1985 and agreed to the form of the Bill. Somehow, in the transmission of the draft to the Minister for Consumer Affairs, a clause was not included.

There has been some concern that if we do not put this clause in, we will later have to amend our Bill if we are to have complementary legislation with the other States. It binds the Crown, which means that if the Crown buys or sells goods overseas it will be bound by the terms of the convention that all States will be supporting.

I move an amendment—

Page 2, after line 17—To insert the following new clause—

Act binds Crown

4. This Act binds the Crown not only in right of Western Australia but also, so far as the legislative power of Parliament permits, the Crown in all its capacities.

Hon. P. G. PENDAL: I intended to raise a question on the schedule which comes after clause 6 which, in part, is related to the new clause moved by the Minister. We have been told by the Minister that the new clause is to cover those situations where the Government is involved in the sale of goods overseas.

Hon. Kay Hallahan: Sale and purchase of goods on the overseas market.

Hon. P. G. PENDAL: In the schedule, starting at page 4, under article 2, we are told the convention does not apply to sales of a number of things including, under subsection (f), sales of electricity. Why does it not apply or why has it been isolated? It has now become more relevant in view of what the Minister has said in relation to new clause 4. For example, we sell huge amounts of liquefied natural gas to the Japanese. I do not know whether that can be construed as being electricity. Why is it that that form of sale is excluded along with a number of others?

Hon. KAY HALLAHAN: Members must keep in mind that we are dealing with an international trade arrangement, and not all countries are in the glorious isolation of an island like Australia. In Europe many countries are in close neighbourhood, particularly those of the European Economic Community; but when one considers countries right across the landmass of Europe some nations have pretty

sophisticated—I suppose one could almost say “domestic”—trading relationships. I think the exemptions are there to accommodate countries which probably already have a high degree of trade in place, and have had that trade in place for a long time.

Hon. JOHN WILLIAMS: In the case of electricity, the agreement extends membership rights to countries in Europe. These agreements were signed with the Vienna Convention in mind. Three countries, in particular, come to notice in respect of electricity arrangements: France, the United Kingdom, and Switzerland.

Members would know that France has a great deal of tidal power, and that during the winter period the hydroelectric scheme in Switzerland does not work quite as efficiently because of the severity of the winter there. Therefore, there is an agreement between France and Switzerland whereby during the winter period Switzerland takes advantage of the tidal barges of France, while in the summer the same scheme operates in reverse between Switzerland and France. There is also an agreement between France and England where the same trade occurs during the English winter. This indicates to me that the term “electricity” means only electricity, and not the substances that can create electricity, in the trading exchange.

New clause put and passed.

Schedule 1—

Hon. P. G. PENDAL: I refer to article 9. We are told in this article that parties are bound by any usage to which they have agreed and by any practices which they have established between themselves. I do not know whether the Minister has any notes on this particular matter. It appears to allow local custom, which might have been the case for hundreds of years, to survive, to be accepted, and to dominate over the concept of any international covenant; that is, if one reads the words in their plain meaning. If that is correct and it is a normal part of an international covenant, what is the point of having a covenant in any way, if it can be supplanted by what has been the custom for hundreds of years, or whatever time is relevant?

Hon. KAY HALLAHAN: Such a covenant is needed because there are many areas where that does not apply and where local custom does not apply. I view this legislation as a courageous and significant attempt to recognise this aspect of a contract. If one rules out arrangements which have worked efficiently between

countries for years, where they comply with but do not want to give away their local customs, one is going to run into deep trouble. I think we have to see that picture when we read this legislation. This is a formal and technical Bill with which to deal, but it is an important one.

Hon. P. G. PENDAL: I thank the Minister for her answer. I have long been interested in this subject, and I believe her reply is a good one.

There are no other matters I wish to raise except to say in a broad sense that I would think that if we were going to see in the future any more Bills of this kind, it may be that they would be more appropriately directed to a proper committee system, once such a system gets under way. The locally-produced portion of this Bill would amount to only one per cent while 99 per cent of the Bill comes from the United Nations.

Earlier I was going to ask the Minister a question in respect of article 3 in relation to the preponderance of obligation because I do not really know what that means. However, I thank the Minister for her comments in relation to article 9.

Schedule put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Report

Bill reported, with an amendment, and the report adopted.

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by Hon. Kay Hallahan (Minister for Community Services), and returned to the Assembly with an amendment.

AGRICULTURE PROTECTION BOARD AMENDMENT BILL

Receipt and First Reading

Bill received from the Assembly; and, on motion by Hon. J. M. Berinson (Attorney General), read a first time.

Second Reading

HON. J. M. BERINSON (North Central Metropolitan—Attorney General) [4.38 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time. The main purpose of the legislation is to change the structure of the Agriculture Protection Board. The eleven-member board at present comprises five representatives of the Country

Shire Councils Association, two representatives of the Primary Industry Association, one representative of the Pastoralists and Graziers Association, and three Government members. The Government members are the Director of Agriculture who is chairman of the board, the chief executive officer, and a Treasury representative. The board is responsible for determining State-wide policy on the control of various pest, animal, and plant species.

Prior to 1970 the board was funded by a rate on agricultural and pastoral properties which was matched by the Government. Apart from a rate on pastoral properties which is matched by the Government and specifically used for operational work or pastoral leasehold properties and a special levy on grain producers which is used for the eradication of skeleton weed, the board is now virtually fully funded from Consolidated Revenue sources. Over 90 per cent of the board's funding comes directly from Consolidated Revenue and the board is accountable in the same way as any other Government agency. Treasury representation on the board is no longer justified and the legislation provides for this representation to be deleted.

It is proposed that membership of the board be retained at 11 and the Bill provides for non-Government representation to be increased from eight to nine. The Government representatives will be the Director of Agriculture and Chief Executive Officer.

Also it is proposed that the method of nomination of non-Government members be altered and the ratio of members be changed. The three present parent bodies will still have representation and in addition the zone control authorities established under the Agriculture and Related Resources Protection Act which recommend on policies and programmes for zonal areas, will be represented by one or more persons. Nominations will be called so that persons whose names are submitted will represent a different zone throughout the State thereby enabling a spread of representation. The spread will be wider than is the case at present.

The Bill provides for the Governor to appoint non-Government members to serve for a three-year period on the basis of—

- (a) one or two persons from the names of seven persons submitted by the Primary Industry Association; five of the nominations shall represent different zones in the agricultural areas and two

shall represent different zones in the pastoral areas;

- (b) one person from the names of six persons submitted by the Pastoralists and Graziers Association; two of the nominations shall represent different zones in the agricultural areas and four shall represent different zones in the pastoral areas;
- (c) between two and five persons from a panel of names of nine persons submitted by the Country Shire Councils Association with each person representing a different zone; and
- (d) between one and five persons from a panel of names comprising one nomination from each of the 11 zone control authorities of a person able to represent the zone; a nominated person who is a member of an authority shall resign before accepting appointment to the board.

The agricultural and pastoral areas referred to are defined according to local authority districts in a schedule to the Bill.

Another amendment proposed in the Bill is to increase to \$100 000 the value of contracts which require sanctioning by the Governor. At present any contract exceeding \$10 000 or which may extend over three years requires the sanction of the Governor. Raising the level is necessary as many of the board's routine contracts such as aerial baiting, fence maintenance, and building extensions exceed the lesser figure. The three-year provision is also impractical.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Hon. W. N. Stretch.

COAL MINERS' WELFARE AMENDMENT BILL

Receipt and First Reading

Bill received from the Assembly; and, on motion by Hon. J. M. Berinson (Attorney General), read a first time.

Second Reading

HON. J. M. BERINSON (North Central Metropolitan—Attorney General) [4.43 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill proposes to amend the Coal Miners' Welfare Act that was originally passed in 1947. Its purpose was to provide amenities, other

than those required to be provided by owners under the Coal Mines Regulation Act, for coal miners, and the improvement of the physical, cultural and social well-being of coal miners, and their education, recreation and living conditions.

This was done by the creation of the coal miners' welfare fund, and a board to administer the fund. The fund itself was financed by the owner of every coal mine paying the fund one penny ha'penny per ton of coal produced from every mine which, when metricated, became 1.2303c per tonne. The rate of 1.2303c per tonne was set in 1947 and has not been changed since.

The fund has been used to finance a fairly wide range of amenities programmes in Collie, with the benefits of these programmes being enjoyed by the Collie community generally. However, the fund's ability to continue financing these projects at the same rate has been gradually diminished by inflation. Figures show that in 1948, the levy on 738 948 tonnes of coal gave an income to the fund of \$9 160 while in 1985 the income was \$45 184 from the levy on 3 672 619 tonnes of coal.

This Bill seeks to increase the rate of levy, by way of regulation rather than by incorporation in the Act, from 1.2303c per tonne to 2c per tonne. The other amendments proposed are of a cosmetic nature to bring the Act up-to-date and in line with current drafting practice.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Hon. A. A. Lewis.

METROPOLITAN REGION IMPROVEMENT TAX AMENDMENT BILL

Receipt and First Reading

Bill received from the Assembly; and, on motion by Hon. J. M. Berinson (Attorney General), read a first time.

Second Reading

HON. J. M. BERINSON (North Central Metropolitan—Attorney General) [4.45 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

As indicated in the Budget speech, the Government has approved for 1987-88 a restructured land tax scale to replace the current scale. The adoption of the new scale means that the 10 per

cent land tax rebate provided in 1985-86 and continued during 1986-87 will not be necessary for 1987-88 and subsequent years, and the Land Tax Assessment Amendment Bill provides for its removal. This rebate also applied to the metropolitan region improvement tax.

The Bill provides for a 10 per cent reduction in the metropolitan region improvement tax to apply in 1987-88 and subsequent years to offset the removal of the existing rebate. The current rate of 0.25c in the dollar will be reduced to 0.225c in the dollar.

Both the 10 per cent reduction in the metropolitan region improvement tax rate and the rebate it replaces reduce annual revenue to the metropolitan region improvement fund account held by the State Planning Commission by in the order of \$1 million. However, this revenue loss is considered necessary to ensure that the maximum possible relief is provided by the land tax changes already approved by the Government.

For the information of members I wish to point out that the metropolitan region improvement tax as a revenue source to the then Metropolitan Region Planning Authority and now to the State Planning Commission has been useful in the implementation of the metropolitan region scheme since 1960. As members will note, the metropolitan region scheme has been the statutory plan which has guided the future development of the Perth metropolitan region from 1963 and will guide us into the twenty-first century.

In recent years, the opening of the Mitchell Freeway—particularly stages 5 and 6—and the prolongation and identification of the Kwinana Freeway controlled access highway reservation southwards towards Thomas Street and beyond, in the local authority areas of the Town of Kwinana and the Shire of Rockingham, have all been possible as a result of the application of the taxes.

The assets in land currently acquired with the assistance of the metropolitan region improvement tax stand at \$118 million in historical costs.

The Bill reflects the commitment of the Government to provide land tax relief.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Hon. G. E. Masters (Leader of the Opposition).

**FORREST PLACE AND CITY STATION
DEVELOPMENT AMENDMENT BILL**

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 18 November.

HON. P. H. LOCKYER (Lower North) [4.49 p.m.]: The Opposition has no objection to this Bill; in fact, it supports the Government's move which is really the tidying up of the principal Act.

Any improvement to the city centre is welcome. It is evident that the city centre is very important. Only today the Perth City Council announced that it has received comments from certain agencies which are concerned about the louts who are using the city centre as their headquarters.

According to a statement made by the manager of Carroll's Bookshop great damage has been done around the city and people are tending not to shop in the city area because they are being harassed by objectionable people. The offending people are mainly teenagers and they have no place to go in the

evenings. The development at Forrest Place will help to alleviate the problems within the city centre.

HON. KAY HALLAHAN (South-East Metropolitan—Minister for Community Services) [4.50 p.m.]: I am pleased indeed that we are all in agreement about the benefit of this Bill and the beautification of Perth. I commend the Bill to the House.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by Hon. Kay Hallahan (Minister for Community Services), and passed.

House adjourned at 4.52 p.m.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

SALE OF GOODS (VIENNA CONVENTION) BILL

Other States

588. Hon. N. F. MOORE, to the Minister for Community Services representing the Minister for Consumer Affairs:

- (1) Which Australian States have enacted legislation similar to the Sale of Goods (Vienna Convention) Bill 1986?
- (2) Has the Commonwealth enacted similar legislation, and if not, when is it expected to legislate?

Hon. KAY HALLAHAN replied:

- (1) Advice from the Federal Attorney General's Department is that, in addition to Western Australia, New South Wales, Queensland, and South Australia have introduced similar legislation.
- (2) No, there is no need for the Commonwealth to enact legislation in this area.

EDUCATION: HIGH SCHOOL

Como: Sport and Art Development Project

598. Hon. P. G. PENDAL, to the Minister for Community Services representing the Minister for Education:

- (1) What is the current status of the Como Senior High School's proposed sport and art development project?
- (2) What is the likelihood of the development going ahead?
- (3) What cost is likely to be involved?

Hon. KAY HALLAHAN replied:

- (1) Discussions between representatives of Como Senior High School, South Perth City Council, the Department of Sport and Recreation, and the Education Department are continuing.
- (2) It will depend on the outcome of the above discussions and the availability of funds at the time.
- (3) Not available at present.

ENVIRONMENT

Old Mill: Trusteeship

602. Hon. P. G. PENDAL, to the Minister for Community Services representing the Minister for Planning:

- (1) Is the Minister aware that Bristile Ltd is intending to relinquish trusteeship of the Old Mill in South Perth?
- (2) Is he aware that the South Perth City Council has been offered responsibility for this vital piece of the national heritage, and that the council is prepared to accept so long as all costs are met by the State?
- (3) Will he do all in his power to bring about this result in view of the Old Mill's place in the State's history?
- (4) Will he or his officers from the WA Heritage Committee meet with the South Perth City Council to explore all possibilities?
- (5) Given the committee's three-fold budget increase this year, will he ensure adequate funds are made available to the council for maintaining the site and buildings?

Hon. KAY HALLAHAN replied:

- (1) I am aware that Bristile Ltd intends to relinquish trusteeship of the Old Mill at South Perth. The mill is located on a public reserve vested in the Department of Conservation and Land Management. The lease which Bristile has held over the land has in fact terminated this year, and the company has agreed to carry on managing the property on an interim basis until a new management body can be found.

The cost of maintaining the site and buildings has been, and continues to be, met from within the budget of the Department of Conservation and Land Management.

- (2) The Department of Conservation and Land Management considers that it may not be the most appropriate body to manage the site itself and is therefore seeking an alternative body to fill this role. It has approached the South Perth City Council on the matter. However, I understand that the council has indicated that it may not be in a position to assume this responsibility.

- (3) to (5) I would expect that adequate funds will be provided to meet the cost of preserving the Old Mill, in view of its importance as part of the cultural heritage of the State.

In the first instance, I would seek alternative corporate sponsorship of the Old Mill. Failing that, the source of those funds is a question which will need to take into account the new arrangements that will apply in 1987 under the provisions of a heritage Bill which the Government intends to introduce. This Bill will provide for increased State funding of heritage conservation, and will deal with the management of heritage properties in public ownership.

I am prepared to see that all possibilities are explored, including the possibility of a role for the South Perth City Council, in order that the future of the Old Mill site can be assured.

While the Heritage Committee may be able to offer useful advice on this issue, it should be noted that the increase in the committee budget in 1986-87 is due solely to the committee having successfully sought a bicentennial allocation for the heritage trails network project. This project is jointly funded by the State and Commonwealth Governments, and its funds are tied specifically to trail construction throughout Western Australia. No moneys are available from this source for maintenance of historic buildings.

HEALTH: HOSPITAL

Boyup Brook District: Status

609. Hon. A. A. LEWIS, to the Minister for Community Services representing the Minister for Health:

- (1) Is it the Government's intention to change the status of the Boyup Brook District Hospital?
- (2) If so—
 - (a) what changes are anticipated;
 - (b) when will these changes be made?

Hon. KAY HALLAHAN replied:

- (1) and (2) The Government has no immediate plans with respect to changing the status of Boyup Brook District Hospital.

EDUCATION: STUDENTS

Allowance Scheme

610. Hon. N. F. MOORE, to the Minister for Community Services representing the Minister for Education:

Further to my question 547, answered on Tuesday, 11 November 1986, will the Minister advise—

- (1) How many year 11 students are expected to benefit from the scheme?
- (2) What is the subsidy per student?
- (3) How does this compare with the amount provided to 16-year-olds under the Austudy programme?

Hon. KAY HALLAHAN replied:

- (1) 1 250. This may increase as the scheme is advertised.
- (2) \$250 over two years. However, because the cost of books is higher in year 11 than in year 12, year 11 students will receive \$180 and then \$70 when they move into year 12.

For 1987 only, year 12 students—because they have not received any allowance in year 11—will receive \$125.

- (3) Austudy will provide a maximum of \$50 per student per week if living at home, and \$73.28 per student per week if living away from home. These amounts will decrease by \$2.50 per annum for every \$10 the parents' income exceeds \$15 745 per annum.

PLANNING

Zoning: Swan Location 10802

619. Hon. NEIL OLIVER, to the Minister for Community Services representing the Minister for Planning:

- (1) What are the zonings of Swan Location 10802 under the metropolitan regional scheme?
- (2) What are the zonings of Lot 20 Swan Location 16 and Swan Location 7955?

Hon. KAY HALLAHAN replied:

- (1) Industrial.

- (2) Lot 20 Swan Location 16 is zoned rural; Swan Location 7955 is zoned public purposes.

MIDLAND ABATTOIR

Vesting Order: Change

620. Hon. NEIL OLIVER, to the Minister for Community Services representing the Minister for Lands:

- (1) Why was it necessary to change the vesting order of Reserve 23917 from abattoirs and saleyards to "for the use of the Western Australian Meat Commission"?
- (2) I refer to the disposal of Reserve No. 23917, known as Swan Location 10802. Is it normal to transfer land in fee simple prior to the creation of a Crown grant in accordance with section 29(2) of the Land Act?
- (3) Is the original Swan Location 7955, reserved for public purposes, also included in that transaction?

Hon. KAY HALLAHAN replied:

- (1) It was considered desirable to ensure that the sale of the land thoroughly complied with the Land Act, section 29 (1) and (2), although the change in the reserve's purpose was possibly not necessary. Subsection (2) enables the Governor to dispose of an estate in fee simple of any lands reserved under subsection (1) for the use and requirements of the Government or of any Crown instrumentality. Subsection (1) enables the Governor to "reserve to Her Majesty, or dispose of in such manner as for the public interest may see fit, any lands vested in the Crown and the purpose for which any such lands are so reserved or disposed of shall be specified in the reservation or disposition."
- (2) It is not only not normal, it is also impossible. In order to take Crown land out of the Land Act and place it under the Transfer of Land Act, it must first be Crown granted. In this transaction, the grant was made to the Western Australian Meat Commission, which transferred the land to the purchaser.
- (3) Swan Location 7955 comprised part of Reserve No. 23917 since 1969, and was included in the transaction.

SPORT AND RECREATION CAMP

Noalimba: Closure

626. Hon. P. G. PENDAL, to the Minister for Community Services representing the Minister for Sport and Recreation:

- (1) Is the Minister aware of the grave concern of groups like the WA Country Rugby Union over the closure of the Noalimba Centre?
- (2) Is he aware that country sportsmen and women have depended on the centre for low-cost accommodation?
- (3) What alternative, if any, will be available to visiting country sportsmen?
- (4) Would the Government be prepared to review its decision on Noalimba, even if this means an increase in fees charged?

Hon. KAY HALLAHAN replied:

- (1) The WA Country Rugby Union has written to me expressing its concerns.
- (2) I am aware that some country sports people have utilised the accommodation and associated facilities available at Noalimba.
- (3) The Department for Sport and Recreation has several other dormitory camps within the metropolitan area capable of accommodating many of the groups which have formerly made use of Noalimba. In addition, a feasibility study is being undertaken by the Western Australian Development Corporation that will take full account of the needs of user groups and consider all reasonable options, including the development of a modern self-sustaining accommodation unit near the Western Australian Sports Centre.
- (4) The future utilisation of the Noalimba site will be determined by the Government on receipt of advice from the WA Development Corporation.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

CASINO

Christmas Day Opening

192. Hon. G. E. MASTERS, to the Minister with special responsibility for the America's Cup:

- (1) In view of the decision for the casino to open on Christmas Day from 10.00 p.m. until 3.30 a.m., and in view of

the fact that it is the only casino in Australia permitted to open on Christmas Day, was permission given under his authority in pursuance of America's Cup legislation where special permission was required?

- (2) If so, is that arrangement likely to be continued after the America's Cup competition has been completed?

Hon. D. K. DANS replied:

- (1) and (2) I have had no communication from the casino, or for that matter from any other licensed premises. Despite the fact that legislation to do certain things comes under my control, in effect the issuing of permits for hours has been left to the Minister for Racing and Gaming.

LIQUOR OUTLETS

Christmas Day Opening

193. Hon. G. E. MASTERS, to the Minister with special responsibility for the America's Cup:

Has the Minister, under the America's Cup legislation, given permission for any other liquor outlets to open on Christmas Day this year?

Hon. D. K. DANS replied:

No. I have left that to the good sense of the Minister for Racing and Gaming, who I understand has access to all authorities from whom she seeks advice, including the police. I really cannot answer the question.

PRISONS

Weapons: Searches

194. Hon. P. H. LOCKYER, to the Minister for Prisons:

The Minister is obviously aware of the large cache of weapons and other things found in the Fremantle Prison. What steps is the Government taking in other prisons, particularly high security prisons in the State, to instigate searches so that this increasing number of weapons does not recur?

Hon. J. M. BERINSON replied:

Members will understand that security is an integral part of the management process of all prisons. It is not dealt with on an ad hoc basis, but it proceeds all the time in an orderly way appropriate to the circumstances, the time, and the nature of the particular institution. I do not see it as my role to enter into any public discussion on any regular or special measures being taken in this respect.

FREMANTLE PRISON

Drugs

195. Hon. P. H. LOCKYER, to the Minister for Prisons:

Is it a fact that a large quantity of drugs was found during the search at Fremantle Prison yesterday?

Hon. J. M. BERINSON replied:

I have been out of my office almost all of today, and I do not have any reports on events in the prison as recently as yesterday.